

## Dons call for inquiry into chair appointments

More than 30 academics at Edinburgh University are calling for a new investigation into claims that "unsatisfactory" procedures are leading to chair appointments at the university.

The staff have persuaded the university court to reopen the matter, first discussed last July, at its next meeting later this month. When the matter was first raised last year, the court ruled that the university should have no further discussion of the matter.

Now Mrs Vivian Salmon, reader in English literature at Edinburgh, has alleged that only 6 per cent of the university's academic staff were at the Senate meeting instead of the 20 per cent normally representing the academic body.

She maintains that the "revised procedures" represent no change in the present unsatisfactory position and that in two cases they were worse than earlier reforms agreed by the Senate in 1969 but implemented only once since then.

The revised procedures merely endorsed the freedom of the faculty deans to consult with whom they wish when making chair appointments, she says.

In 1969 the Senate laid down that chair vacancies should be advertised in the university

"Bulletin" and that all interested academic staff should be asked for their views about representation on the chair committee which fills the vacancy.

Last year's revised procedures restricted this right. They also removed the guidance formerly given to the dean that chair committee members should be drawn from related fields of study.

"Although it is true that departmental members are free to offer their view on chair appointments to the dean they have no guarantee that the advice will be taken into account," Mrs Salmon said this week. Consultation was fine but unless there was an obligation to act on it the procedure became meaningless.

Professor Peter Vandome, of the economics department, alleged last week that procedures over several professorial appointments in the last three years had given cause for concern.

This had centred around the lack of consultation and lack of review to guide the chair committees. A chair of education appointment recently announced is believed to be one of the homes of contention.

The Association of University Teachers is currently working out model procedures for chair appointments at the request of the Edinburgh branch of the union.—TJSS.

## Plan to reopen college postponed for a year

by Maggie Richards

A plan for an early reopening of Fircroft College at Birmingham, closed three years ago after student unrest, has had to be postponed.

The adult education college was scheduled to reopen in September, but the date has been put back a year after the Charity Commissioners objected to the involvement of the TUC.

Confidential sources who had applied for the post of principal will now be invited to reapply later.

Fircroft was closed after students rejected the college curriculum and instituted a new programme of studies themselves. A Government inquiry later recommended the dismissal of the college principal, Mr Tony Corfield, and four tutors. The staff were later dismissed, but Mr Corfield has remained at the college as warden. He has said that he does not intend to reapply for the principal's post.

New hopes of reopening the college came with the proposal for

a TUC majority on a new governing body, and the addition of trade union courses. But recently the Charity Commissioners objected to the TUC's simple majority on the governing body. They pointed out that the college had been established in 1913 by the Cadbury family with the clear intention that it should not support any particular religious or political viewpoints.

The Fircroft Trust, which sponsors the college, has been trying to overcome the stumbling block but it will not be feasible now to appoint staff and issue a prospectus.

The issue has also led to doubts about the financing of the college over the next 12 months by the trustees, who have already had to bear the cost of the last three years without the 80 per cent funding provided by the Department of Education and Science during Fircroft's working life. The trustees are expected to continue to finance the college during the coming year.

## Poly reprieves expelled students

More than 100 students issued with expulsion orders by North-east London Polytechnic have been reprieved after intervention by the Department of Education and Science and the National Union of Students.

The students, who are all self-financing, are in arrears with their tuition fees. Most are from overseas and they include first-year students about to take their final examinations. They were issued with expulsion notices at the beginning of term.

Dr George Brossan, the polytechnic's director, refused to comment on the expulsions this week, but an internal memorandum issued by him says: "The polytechnic has been officially informed that it would be helpful to the progress of discussions between the DES and the NUS if any action by NUSP governors could be deferred pending the outcome of talks with Mr Oakes."

Mr Peter Ashby, deputy president of the NUS, said he was seeking urgent discussions with Mr Oakes, Minister of State for Higher Education. He said non-payment of fees was a national problem caused by massive increases at the beginning of the year.

Mr Ashby estimated that at least 2,000 students could be forced off their courses this term because of inability to pay fees.

## Bradford starts ban on marking

University teachers at Bradford have already put into operation the ban on marking final examination papers which is expected to spread throughout the country if the Government fails to make an acceptable pay offer.

A university spokesman said this week: "We have had this problem since the beginning of term when the first final year examinations started."

Examinations were proceeding as usual and scripts were being handed to heads of departments. The Association of University Teachers' policy at Bradford is to refuse to mark papers but the university said it could not tell how far the ban was being carried out.

AUT headquarters said that there was evidence of considerable support for the ban. Liverpool has voted 4 to 1 in favour of it and Surrey and University College London, traditionally a conservative institution, have also backed it.

The AUT expects to hear today whether the Government will agree to the universities' request that the pay claim should go to arbitration.

Glasgow's AUT branch this week overturned a plan to mark exam papers normally and then withhold the results until the ban is removed. It voted to stick to the official AUT line of no marking.

## DES rules out switch to home study

by Peter David

There was no practical prospect of encouraging significantly more students to stay at home and study in their local universities, Sir James Hamilton, permanent secretary at the Department of Education and Science, said last week.

During questions about the accommodation difficulties facing students, Sir James told a committee of MPs that studies carried out by the DES suggested that there was no feasible method of altering the proportion of home-based students and those who left home to study. Unless some equitable and practicable method was found, the DES intended to drop investigations into the problem.

Sir James, who was giving evidence to Parliament's Public Accounts Committee, rejected criticism from Mr Edward Du Cann, MP, that the DES argument was exaggerated. Mr Du Cann described Sir James' argument as "an attempt to avoid the problem of accommodation" and "an attempt to avoid the problem of accommodation".

But Sir James insisted such attempts could be construed as an attack. He pointed out that if students who might have gone to stay at home, they could choose from which they could choose would be limited.

Sir James was asked about university catering losses, accommodation, the fees charged at universities, and the funding of students' uniforms. He said that the universities' current grant allocations this year had not been excessive. Sir James was told by Mr Du Cann: "The point is whether the universities have been able to get out of the current financial straits. The view of this committee is that they should not."

Mr Peter Horden MP expressed concern at the commercial enterprises such as travel and insurance companies operated by the National Union of Students. Sir James said that the activities of the NUS were outside the DES sphere of influence. Asked whether the department should be accountable for the actions of the NUS, he replied emphatically: "No, sir."

Sir James gave a preview of DES proposals to increase control over the level of student union fees. A new system would combine a fixed subscription with a negotiable supplement provided by the university or college.

Sir James was questioned closely about the costs of Oxford and Cambridge and asked whether their system of setting their own fees constituted "a blank cheque on public funds". He conceded that the fees system was "a lacuna in the system of control" but warned MPs that to treat with care figures suggesting that unit costs at Oxbridge were between 25 and 30 per cent higher than at other universities.

The difference was caused, he pointed out, by the quite different manner of operation at the two universities, and cost differences between them and other universities with a similar range of activities were nearer 10 per cent.

## NEXT WEEK

Higher Education in the 1990s—Peter Scott launches a three-part series.  
Immigration Policy and the death of liberal Britain.  
Education counselling in Northern Ireland.  
Andrew Gurr—new books on Shakespeare.  
Julius Gould reviews Education and the Political Order.

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## Engineering qualifications 'must be broadened'

by Robin McKie  
Science Correspondent

The route to professional engineering qualifications must be broadened if more able young people are to be attracted into engineering and if the industry's labour needs are to be met. And the major contribution to this part-time and block release courses can make to the education of engineers at all levels must be recognized.

This is the main argument in the evidence of the 70,000 strong National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education to the Punnett committee. NATFHE has about 13,000 engineers at either chartered or technician engineer level and it is estimated that every year its members teach about 60,000 students studying engineering and technology at advanced level.

The NATFHE submission accepts the basic relationship between the standard of pass degree and chartered engineer status but argues that the path to such status should be broadened. It calls for more opportunity for people to progress through the Engineers' Registration

Board grades of technician, engineer, and chartered engineer, and warns against the schism between degree and degree qualifications and the rigid grading structure.

The committee has been recognizing the contribution of time day and block release to the education of engineers. NATFHE is critical of the higher national certificate which provides a route to conventional route to engineering.

"The conventional route to engineering is through the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, or equivalent, but many are not doing for many years. Part-time course with the engineering and technology can often provide a pattern of advance not matched by other forms of education."

The association calls on the committee to investigate widening entrance opportunities for courses such as the new technology education council courses and any national diploma in technology.



Victorian buildings in Brighton form the theme of a new series of paintings and drawings by Brighton Polytechnic adult students who ran throughout this month at the college's Faculty of art and design.

## NUS attacks finance plan

The National Union of Students has criticized Government plans for a new system of student union financing disclosed last week. Mr Peter Ashby, deputy president of the NUS, said the proposals meant that union fees would remain fixed at the student grant system, "an idea to which the NUS is absolutely opposed".

Arguing for a guaranteed union fee for all students, whether they receive grants or not, Mr Ashby claimed the DES proposals would guarantee conflict between local authorities and student unions.

"The Government's proposals also seem to imply a shift in funding from national to local sources, which would mean that local authorities would only be able to recover 60 per cent of their outlay on fees through the rate support grant, compared with the present system where they get 90 per cent back through central pooling."

## Young consulted on aid scheme

The British Youth Council and Youthaid are launching a major venture "Into Work" to involve young people in the design and implementation of the £168m Youth Opportunities Programme.

The £168m, one-year project, financed by the Manpower Services Commission, seeks to harness the wishes and abilities of young people in influencing its content and structure to fulfil the needs to a greater extent.

## SRC set to close top space research station

by Robin McKie  
Science Correspondent

One of Britain's leading research stations, the Appleton Laboratory, is facing closure. A working party, set up by the Science Research Council, has been considering its operation and it is now understood that the group will call for a shutdown when it reports to the next full council meeting in July.

Annual grants for Appleton, one of the SRC's three main research establishments, have already been cut from £10.7m to £8.9m in 1977-78. The SRC's main concern, and more an engineering research, was the laboratory's facilities are to be moved to another SRC centre, the Rutherford Laboratory in Didcot, and the 300 Appleton scientists will also be required to make the 40-mile move.

The director of the Appleton centre, Dr Frederick Horner, said that he reacted with mixed feelings to the shutdown. "It is very difficult to dissociate my personal feelings about the possible closure

of a place with which I have had close associations all my working life and with what is good for the SRC as a whole. However, I do have personal regrets about the move."

He added that there had been a strong lobby at Appleton among scientists opposed to the closure and several had prepared reports for the working party, which is being led by the SRC chairman, Professor Geoffrey Allen. Now Professor Allen is to visit the laboratory on Tuesday to meet staff.

Dr Horner said the combining of the Appleton facilities with those at the Rutherford site represented "a conservation of resources" for the SRC. He added that there would be few problems in moving equipment since few bulky items were involved.

The main work is concerned with space projects, but also includes some radio research. Recent victims of SRC cutbacks in these areas have included the dropping of the Skylark rocket programme and reduction in high altitude balloon research. There had also been plans to move the SRC's astrophysics division to the Culham Laboratory in

## 'Surgeon Oakes' claims HE brain transplant success

by Peter David

A strong defence of his working group's recommendations for a national body to administer public health higher education came this week from Mr Oakes, Minister of State for Higher Education.

Addressing a joint conference in London sponsored by the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education and the TUC, Mr Oakes said changes in the present system were essential because it lacked a mechanism for central planning in the maintained sector.

"The essence of the trouble is that it has no central nervous system. It can be seen as a vast organism with giant limbs with immense strength in those limbs but no higher intelligence to direct those strengths to best effect," he said.

"I see the outcome of my group's work as providing the higher intelligence to the system without major surgery on the organism itself." But Mr Oakes made it clear that there was room for radical development and revision of the report. Large parts of it were not continued on back page.

## Hard-up students to benefit from new DES initiative

by Sue Reid

Hundreds of college and polytechnic students facing financial hardship following the steep rise in tuition fees will benefit from a new initiative by the Department of Education and Science.

In a surprise turnabout the DES has sent a circular to local education authorities telling them that they can be compensated when they waive the fees of students "in exceptional cases of hardship".

The latest ruling follows strong pressure from the National Union of Students and some local education authorities. It comes after a series of cases where students have been refused to re-enter colleges unless they pay outstanding fee charges.

The NUS claimed this week that North London, Thames and Essex polytechnics had warned some students about their failure to pay last term's fees. The union claimed the affected students may be prevented from taking examinations. A PNI spokesman denied this.

The circular says local authorities can charge the cost of students' fee arrears against the advanced for their education "pool" a system for sharing the cost of this sector of education among authorities. But it



Professor Geoffrey Allen heads working party.

Slough to Appleton but this was also abandoned for economic reasons. That decision will probably be moved to Rutherford as well.

On staff hardship, Dr Horner said it depended on individual circumstances. Some scientists who lived in the area had wives who also worked there and were consequently tied to the district. However, he did not think it would be impossible for them to commute as the Rutherford site was only 40 miles away and most of the journey was by motorway.

The director of administration for the SRC, Mr John Visser, said some members of staff had "immobilised" contracts which meant their jobs were tied to the Appleton site. They would be given the option of moving to Rutherford or could accept redundancy. He added that the working party still had to decide whether the new contract at Rutherford would consist of two separate laboratories on one site or would be integrated into a single establishment.

The Appleton Laboratory began life in 1925 as a radio research centre. It later began research into the ionosphere and was closely associated with the scientist, Sir Edward Appleton, discoverer of the atmospheric "heavenly" layer, the Appleton layer, and after whom the laboratory was later named.

The centre was also involved in pioneering work into the development of radar and in the late 1950s became involved in space projects and research. The last all-British scientific satellite Ariel 5, launched in 1974, is being controlled from the laboratory.

## Universities fear effects of new grants

by Judith Judd

Universities may find that their recurrent grants for next year do not compensate them for the increased number of students they have to take. This was the fear being expressed this week as administrators studied the figures for individual grants sent out by the University Grants Committee.

The global total for the grant announced last month showed a rise of about 1.5 per cent, in line with the expected increase in student numbers.

In its letter to universities last week, the UGC says: "The total grant for the university system represents a small increase in real terms over that for 1977/78." However, universities said this week that a preliminary look at the individual grants showed that they had received less money than they had expected. One calculated that it would be £250,000 in the red.

One reason for the difference is suggested in the UGC letter which says the large commitments of some universities for medical schools have had to be taken into account. Newcastle, for instance, has received an estimated sum of £112,000 (reduced from £130,000) to cover its medical school.

The committee says the grant will require continued economies from universities. Its letter lays out the assumptions on which they have been calculated.

One is that there will be an increase in salaries of all university staff of around 8 per cent. Money for rising the university teachers' pay annually, settled last week, will be paid in addition to this. Another is that inflation will be around 6 per cent. The UGC says it has also based its calculations on an assessment of each university's likely income from fees.

The figures were not last week's data include local authority rates. Money for these will be allocated later. In Scotland, where there has been a revolution, considerable sums may be involved.

## WHAT THEY GOT

	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
Admission	11,137	11,137	11,137
Academic	8,778	8,778	8,778
Technical	2,359	2,359	2,359
Professional	1,234	1,234	1,234
Other	1,234	1,234	1,234
Graduate	1,234	1,234	1,234
Postgraduate	1,234	1,234	1,234
Research	1,234	1,234	1,234
Teaching	1,234	1,234	1,234
Library	1,234	1,234	1,234
Other	1,234	1,234	1,234
Not yet available			
London	12,115	12,115	12,115
North-east	12,115	12,115	12,115
North-west	12,115	12,115	12,115
Other	12,115	12,115	12,115
Not yet available			
South-east	12,115	12,115	12,115
South-west	12,115	12,115	12,115
Other	12,115	12,115	12,115
Not yet available			

## Overseas students statement promised

The Government is still formulating a new policy on overseas students in Britain and is likely to make a formal announcement before the summer recess of Parliament, said the Department of Education and Science this week. In answer to a question on the possibility of setting up a standing commission to oversee overseas students affairs the Minister said the Department of Education and Science was still having talks about this and the overall foreign students policy.

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## Problems must be faced as era begins—Annan

by Judith Judd

Higher education is at the end of an era and the beginning of a new one, Lord Annan, provost of University College London, said this week.

Speaking at the opening of the college's sesqui-centennial exhibition, he said the era of expansion was over.

The problem now was how to preserve institutions such as University College where research of the highest quality was done and yet give large numbers of students—some of them might well be mature students—the benefits of intellectual training.

"Are we to follow France and single out *Grandes Ecoles* for special treatment? Are we to follow Germany and set up *Max Planck* Institutes where the highest research is primarily done?"

"Are we to follow the Soviet Union and compel certain places to become institutes of professional training? Are we to decide now to make the adjustments which would enable a few institutions to be closed down in the 1990s so that the rest do not suffer from malnutrition?"

"I do not know: but what I do know is that my colleagues in all universities are singularly unwilling to discuss these fundamental problems."

Lord Annan said that Mrs

Williams, secretary of state for education, who opened the exhibition, was the first education secretary for years who had come out firmly in public to say that standards in schools were too low.

She had said that the quality of teaching must be improved and that she would have the universities behind her.

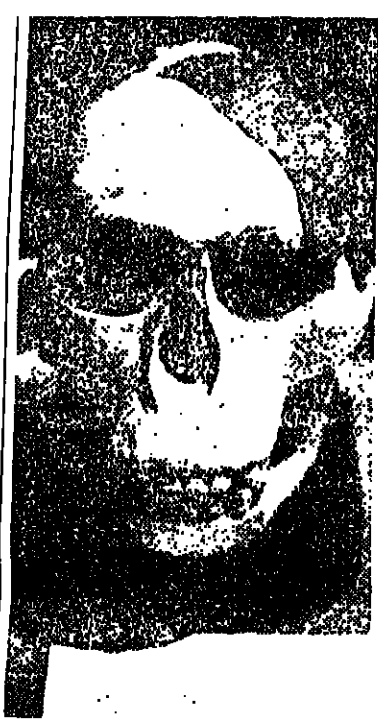
Earlier, Lord Annan said that the importance of colleges in Oxford and Cambridge had declined whereas in London colleges and schools were the places where teaching and research was done.

University College was a university within a university but how was it to maintain its reputation for high scholarship in the years to come?

It could be done in only one way. "We must realize that we cannot expect the way we have conducted our research in the past 25 years to continue exactly the same for the next 25."

"We have got to develop new ways of financing research and that will mean working in far closer contact with the foundations and benefactors who give us funds than was formerly the case."

Lord Annan said that language departments had to accommodate themselves far more to the reality that Britain belonged to the European Community, and that English students wanted to learn two, not one, European languages.



*Roanthropus dawsoni*, left, and *Australopithecus africanus* found at an important exhibition at University College London, opened this week to commemorate the sesqui-centennial of the college. It will run until the end of next week.

*Roanthropus dawsoni*—Pittdown man—was discovered in Pittdown, Sussex, in 1912 and interpreted as an early large-brained but primitive toothed form of man. It was proved to be a forgery—the skull turned out to belong to a modern person in the 1950s as an increasing number of contradictory fossil finds were found.



*Australopithecus africanus*, was considered by many anthropologists to be the direct ancestor of modern man. It includes a relatively large brain in relation to body size and relatively generalized dentition. However, this conclusion is proving controversial in the light of recent discoveries in both south and east Africa. Many feel that this fossil may represent a separate lineage.

Other exhibits include the first report of the council to the general meeting of the proprietors of the college in 1826, and the original prospectus which appeared in *The Times* in 1825.

## Oakes 'opt out' clause under fire

by Peter David

The prospect of individual polytechnics transferring to national control as a result of the proposed Oakes working group on public sector higher education is attacked by the National Union of Students in a detailed report.

The NUS claims that the "opt out" clause gives "strength to those who favour a Polytechnic Grants Committee to represent the interests of a university lines." "In practice it would witness the piecemeal transfer of the polytechnics to national control, in an unplanned way, in the absence of any public debate about what it should be there in the first place."

Transferring control of a polytechnic to the new national body would irreversibly break the link between the institution and its local community, says the NUS. "The colleges would not even have a strong governing body, such as exists in the universities, to mitigate against arbitrary national control. The ability of students and community groups to influence decisions would be enormously reduced."

The NUS stance is likely to bring students into direct conflict with polytechnic directors. Although the Committee of Directors of Polytechnics has yet to react formally to the Oakes report, its chairman, Dr Arthur Suddaby, in a letter to the NUS, has made it clear that the director would like to extend the "opt out" clause to enable polytechnics to begin a general transfer to national control.

Other features of the Oakes report which meet with NUS approval are the "narrow and inflexible" financing procedures imposed, the failure to deal adequately with non-advanced further education and the prospect of universities having to pay more money for less control of their polytechnic.

But the NUS approves of the concept of a national body, and welcomes Oakes's recommendation for giving polytechnics greater freedom under their local authorities. Among the union's proposed revisions to the report are the inclusion of a student representative on the national body and a series of arrangements to protect non-advanced courses.

According to the NUS the national body should be required to ensure that any changes in provision for advanced courses, in no way disadvantage the non-advanced courses on offer. Colleges submitting plans to the national body should be required to spell out their implications for such courses.

The submission adds: "Specific attempts must be made to increase the commitment of the local community to the colleges. If the local population support the educational aims of the college, this should be reflected in the attitude of the local education authority."

Community participation could be fostered, the NUS suggests, through community forums of local groups and profiles of community educational needs, drawn up by colleges. Local authorities and colleges should be required to draw up joint development plans "to enable wide debate within the college and in the community of the college's long term plans."

## Tory AMA could hit Oakes proposal

by Peter David

The Conservative victories in last week's local government elections could have a serious impact on the likelihood of the Oakes committee proposals for a national body for polytechnics and colleges being implemented.

One result of the Tory gains is almost certain to be a change in the powerful Association of Metropolitan Authorities, a former Labour bastion, which represents 77 local authorities including the Inner London Education Authority.

Transfer of control could take up to three months as negotiations proceed between the parties. The extent of the Conservative gains will remain uncertain until authorities without clear majorities—such as South Tyneside, Hammersmith and

Wolverhampton—decide who to nominate. Even then Labour could retain control of the key policy committee which has a large ex officio group of chairmen from subordinate committees, mostly Labour who have been elected for 12 months.

If the Conservatives do take over the policy committee, however, they can be expected to be unsympathetic to important aspects of the Oakes report. A sub-group of officers, headed by Mr Dudley Pike, chief education officer of Manchester, has been preparing a formal AMA reaction to the report.

But the AMA response will have to gain the approval of the policy committee before being submitted to the Department of Education and Science. Even under Labour, the committee came close to refusing to sign the Oakes report several

times, and was persuaded to allow its representatives to endorse it only after persuasive arguments led by Sir Ashley Bramall, Labour leader of the ILA and a member of the Oakes group.

The Conservative group on the AMA is thought to have grave doubts about the effect of the Oakes proposals on local government finance generally, and with the recent resignation of Sir Ashley as chairman of the Council of Local Education Authorities, defenders of Oakes within the AMA will have a more difficult task.

Among changes which the association might insist on introducing to the Oakes recommendations are arrangements for mitigating the rate burden of the proposed financial system, and an increase in local authority representation on the national body.



The 1500 metres underway at the British Polytechnics' Track and Field championship staged at Nottingham last Saturday. Trent Polytechnic Athletic Club, which organized it for the second consecutive year, came out the overall winners in the men's match for the third successive year. Thomas won the women's match.

## NUS asks for accommodation and grant rises to be equal

The National Union of Students has asked vice-chancellors to keep increases in hall of residence fees to the same level as the latest increase in the student grant.

In a letter to Lord Boyle, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the NUS says the expense of other elements in the grant is totally unacceptable. The NUS has also expressed concern at the discrepancies in hall fees charged by different universities. Citing a recent survey the union claims that the differences between fees charged in provincial universities can exceed £160 over the year. Nearly 40 per cent of students in traditional halls are paying £50 or more for board and lodging than is provided for in their grant.

The letter points out that accommodation has been taking an ever-increasing proportion of the grant. In 1972-73 54 per cent was designated for board and lodging in London and 53 per cent elsewhere. The figure has now increased, says

the NUS, to 65.1 and 58.6 per cent respectively.

"The provision of the common element—which provides for such vital needs as books and travel—is now jeopardizing the academic and social life of our membership," the letter claims. "The present trend of increasing the board and lodging at the expense of other elements in the grant is totally unacceptable."

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## Aston revises priorities over fee rise

by Sue Reid

Increased tuition fees may cause a number of postgraduate lecture courses at Aston University to be dropped and resources diverted to undergraduate programmes Dr J. A. Pope, the vice-chancellor, has warned.

Writing in the university's annual report for 1976-77 Dr Pope claims that the effect of higher tuition fees on postgraduate work is complex and has yet to materialize but they affect adversely the number of self-financing students and this, in the past, had often discouraged firms from supporting postgraduate work.

However he states that the cut-back in postgraduate work would not be an ill-forgotten work because for the next few years a greater number of undergraduate students will be entering the university while financial constraints will not allow a corresponding increase in staff numbers.

He says: "It will also give the university an opportunity to consider providing four or five year degree courses for the more able, particularly in the faculties of engineering and management."

"Ultimately I would hope that a similar integrated course between the university and industry could be evolved for the students in physics and chemistry departments."

The increase in the number of students applying to enter was now double the national average. The failure rate had remained at a reasonable level with external entries from research contracts, and other services increasing by 34 per cent. The figure for all these entries including self-financing courses was now approaching £1m a year.

The vice-chancellor maintains that last year the university was the most successful in the country in the field of graduate employment. The unemployment rate for Aston graduates six months after leaving the university was less than half the national average.

There had been an upturn in interest by the school leaver in engineering as a career and there was every indication that this trend would be continued. However the university was opposed to the fee differential between home and foreign students.

## Dr Judge urges better qualified teacher trainees

by Judith Judd

The concurrent pattern of teacher training under which teachers choose their careers at the age of 16 will shortly collapse, Dr Harry Judge, director of Oxford's department of educational studies said this week.

Dr Judge was giving one of the 1978 Conservative education lectures in the grand committee room of the House of Commons.

He said there would be a need for a growing emphasis on the general education of the teacher. "Teachers will be recruited all but exclusively from the ranks of students who have already completed a full course of higher education of a general kind."

This would be necessary if teachers were to enjoy a satisfactory and satisfying position within society.

A second important development must be a clearer emphasis on practical skills and professional competence. "Great damage was done to the image and effectiveness of teachers in the 1960s by the growth of loose and sloppy theories about education and teaching."

"The proper antidotes to such

abuses lie in the firm location of teacher training within schools, the promotion of research about teacher effectiveness, and the revivifying of the staff of teacher training establishments."

This meant that teacher trainees should be drawn from among the most successful practitioners in schools and should not be isolated in their own careers from work in schools.

The question of tenure and security must also be tackled by central and local government. The present arrangements favoured incompetent and inadequate teachers to an extent which was unfair to pupils and their parents.

Dr Judge said teachers would need access to in-service training and substantial leave on a scale not yet envisaged.

"There is no doubt that teachers work harder than most members of our society but—alarmingly little of their energy is devoted to improving their professional competence. Many of them have to exhaust themselves by running ineffectually fast simply in order to stand still."

They would need to be given lighter teaching loads.

## Catalogue of counselling

The possibility of establishing an information catalogue of counselling services and other developments in adult education will be one of the items under discussion at a meeting in London next week.

The meeting, on Wednesday, stems from discussion by a working group at a conference on education for adults sponsored by the Open University and the TUC Department on establishing more effective ways of informing trade unionists about adult education, and about methods of identifying the needs of trade union members.

Discussions will also take place on liaison with the TUC Education Department on establishing more effective ways of informing trade unionists about adult education, and about methods of identifying the needs of trade union members.

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## Role of operational research examined at conference

by Maggie Richards

The future in higher, further and adult education and the role operational research might play in planning the way ahead were the two major issues examined at a one-day conference this week, organised jointly by the Operational Research Society and the British Educational Administration Society.

Setting the scene for the conference, at Aston University in Birmingham, Mr A. J. Fox, deputy chief education officer for the city, reviewed developments in the post-Robbins era. In 1964, immediately after the Robbins Report but prior to the establishment of the polytechnics and the Open University, it would have been impossible to forecast the future accurately.

One area in which he visualized growth in the next decade was women's education, though with his present responsibility for schools he was concerned at the effects of this development on family life.

Professor Gurth Higgin, professor of continuing management education at Loughborough University, delivered further back into the past an examination of trends in society, capitalism since the war resulting in the loss of security values and led to dissatisfaction among young people.

Dealing with the future requirements of industry, Professor Higgin reported that companies anticipated

there would be a demand for staff with a good general level of education but not necessarily possessing specialist qualifications. Companies, such as those in the computer industry, would prefer to provide this training themselves.

The third speaker at the conference Mr Michael Shattock, academic registrar at Warwick University, focused on the falling birth-rate and the Department of Education and Science projections of its impact on higher education which, he felt, might prove to be optimistic.

Mr Shattock went on to demonstrate that the problem was not unique to Britain. Other European countries were experiencing similar patterns, some in a more drastic fashion.

Mr Shattock, who is chairman of a working party of the Conference of University Administrators which has been examining statistical data in relation to the future course of higher education, said his group's final report was expected to be ready by June.

An interim report published by the group in April last year warned that universities and polytechnics of the possible repercussions on the declining birth-rate.

Discussion during the last session of the conference ranged over the role of operational research in helping to chart the path of the education system in the future. It was suggested a systems approach might be useful in tackling some of the problems.

## Call for lifting of barriers for EEC students

by Sue Reid

The Association of Polytechnics is urging the Government to take action to remove barriers to allow the free movement of students within the countries of the European Economic Community.

In a detailed response to the EEC commission consultative document on admission to higher education institutions (YES, March 24) the APT claims that the real barrier to movement between the member states will be linguistic.

It alleges that poor language teaching in Britain will restrict the movement of British students and lack of support and enthusiasm for crash language courses by polytechnics and universities will limit the ability of students from EEC nations to come to Britain to study.

The union argues that minor barriers on admission procedures and financial provision facing free movement should be removed. But it comes out in favour of the current Schools Council proposals to move the schools examination system in Britain into line with other European examinations in particular the *Baccalauréat*.

The consultative paper noted that the current take up by EEC students of opportunities to study in other countries is generally slight.

It claimed that a system to promote the exchange of students could have only small financial implications. It would, said the document, remove barriers between the EEC students in the education field and other subject areas.

"The major limitation on the numbers taking part in the 'ex-

change' movement within the EEC will be the need to be proficient in the language of the host country," the APT now argues.

"It is no kindness for an institution to accept students who cannot follow the courses for which they have enrolled. The diverse circumstances students under these circumstances may be more noticeable in polytechnics where there is closer contact between the student and the teaching staff."

A language testing system before application would be desirable, although it might be impractical, although some may be rigorous than the current British Council tests would be required.

The exchange of students to date had broadly been one way for Britain, says the APT.

Feature, page 10

## Undercover police operation alleged

The National Union of Students has been asked to investigate claims that police have mounted an undercover operation against alleged heroin dealers at the City of London Polytechnic.

The union was asked to interview following student complaints that two detectives had been hired as "bouncers" at a union building and issued with student identity cards. A member of the union staff has been dismissed for his role in the affair.

Mr Nigel Maglinne, president of the City students' union, said he had welcomed attempts to stop drugs trafficking if it was going on at the polytechnic, but he disapproved of policemen posing as students.

## Cash threat to Ashmolean

Oxford University's Ashmolean Museum may have to close its doors to the public because of lack of money, Mr David Piper, director of the museum, has claimed in his annual report for 1976-77.

"Adequate funding of the museum continues to afford increasing anxiety," he writes. The general board grant for the current year had been increased overall by just under 8 per cent over the previous year against an estimated inflation rate of 17 per cent.

The report adds: "The general board can allocate only from the funds that have come from the University Grants Committee. In the present tight financial constraint on grants to universities Oxford is

purely academic priorities are bound to be given an ever increasing proportion of the total available."

The university could not, Mr Piper said, be expected in this situation to make any extra provision for its museums to improve their amenities for the general public or even primary or secondary education.

But he added that in a museum of the calibre of the Ashmolean with 180,000 visitors a year, the deficiency in amenities was almost unbearable.

He hoped that Oxford University finances would not become so strained that the museum would have to close to all but specialist scholars. But said Mr Piper: "It is not inconceivable."

## Sociology in crisis

Sociology, the most important, most troublesome and most dangerous academic discipline, is torn between the pressure of government and business demands and varying political and ideological controls.

The universities which shape its teaching are either tired and middle-aged or have surrendered to out-and-out democracy. In brief, argues Professor John Rex, sociology today is in crisis. However, there are signs of a more tolerant and liberal sociological community emerging. But is it in danger of being shaped by the political pressures and academic structures which now threaten the subject?

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## Universities 'hold back' veterinary school cash

Universities with veterinary schools are withholding money allocated to them by the University Grants Committee, Professor K. M. Clayton, chairman of the UGC's agricultural and veterinary sub-committee, has alleged.

He told a conference organized by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons that in recent years universities with veterinary schools had not passed on the full proportion of funds allocated.

But he warned that no action could be taken about the issue without undermining the freedom of the universities. However, the UGC had warned the relevant vice-chancellors of the seriousness of the position.

Professor Clayton urged the veterinary deans to battle for their fair share of funds following a conference debate about the high cost of maintaining veterinary students at British universities. Delegates were told that the figure per head was conspicuously more than for other students.

Redistribution of existing money, however, would still leave the schools grossly under-funded, according to several speakers, and some more drastic solution was required. Professor W. L. M. McIntyre, chairman of the RCVS education committee, attacked the policy of the Agricultural Research Council, which contrasted markedly with that of the Medical Research Council.

The latter, he said, spent nearly 75 per cent of its budget within the university system, whereas only 0.3 per cent of the ARC's budget of £49m in 1977-78 went to the veterinary schools.

It was no answer, he claimed, for the ARC to protest that it had huge existing commitments in non-university institutes, because in the past decade the ARC had spent £20m in enlarging those institutes and had a problem keeping them fully utilized.

Sir Frank Hartley, vice-chancellor of London University, held out little hope of the veterinary schools ever being adequately supported by the UGC alone. To keep its medical schools reasonably staffed, London University had to collect £15m a year from commercial, charitable and related sources. If the veterinary schools could not do something similar, they would have to trim their courses in keeping with their available finances.

This point was taken up by Professor G. H. Arthur, of Bristol University, who noted that the animal welfare societies in Britain had an annual income of £10m but made almost no contribution to university veterinary education and research. Several speakers also drew attention to the little help coming from the livestock sector of agriculture, a £4,000m industry, whose administrators cost £26m a year and government advisers £28m a year.

Speaking for veterinarians in practice, Mr J. N. Gripper believed that action should be taken to limit the number of women entering training. In two years' time, he said, one-third of veterinary graduates would be women and, given the strong preference of farmers for male graduates, he doubted whether such a large number of women would find employment.

This, coupled with the hard physical work involved, made a special case for discrimination on admissions. Fortunately, for those inclined to schoolgirls' clamouring to become veterinarians, this view found no general favour.

A survey in the United States had shown no difference in wage in later life between male and female veterinary graduates; nor was there any factual evidence so far to suggest that women were not being smoothly assimilated into the veterinary profession.

## Robot among Royal Society exhibits

A newly-developed robot takes to its test tracks at the Royal Society in London. The machine was on show at the society's conference last week when a variety of scientific exhibits were presented as part of the annual event.

The vehicle, based on a military bomb disposal chassis, carries a computer which uses data from a battery of sensors, including those

based on touch, sonar, photo-electric and motor. Looking to assess its environment, the robot carried out several fetch and carry tasks, although its developers, members of the staff at Warwick University's computing science department, emphasized that it was also capable of participating in long sequences of complex operations in a crowded environment.

The research conducted at Warwick's robot laboratory is aimed at studying the problems of mobility in robots and some techniques developed for navigation have already found application in work connected with North Sea oil platforms.

Other exhibits on show included illustrations of the research methods prepared by various British universities to deal with the very small samples of moon rock brought back by the Russian Luna 24 space craft and which were donated by the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

In another presentation, staff of the Institute of Educational Technology at Surrey University gave a show of some of the techniques and instruments they had developed as computer simulations to be used in teaching biology, chemistry and physics where experiments could not easily be performed in the laboratory.

## Birkbeck union backs Model E for the 1990s

Students at Birkbeck College, London University, have thrown their weight behind "model E" in the Government's discussion paper Higher Education into the 1990s.

An official submission from the students' union says that the fifth model is the only one to hold out the prospect of educational advancement for mature and working-class students but not at the cost of existing institutions of higher education.

In order to work, the model must be accompanied, say the students, by more open access to higher education. "This must necessarily involve a re-examination of the GCE system and its replacement by a system of qualifications that would be made more flexible and an integral part of which would be the further education sector and colleges of higher education."

Implementation of model E would involve a revision of the system of fees and student support, the submission says. Until paid educational leave becomes a reality, mandatory awards should be extended, and provisions for mature students improved.

Higher education will have to develop new curricula and styles of operation to cater for different types of students, says the submission. "A comprehensive and adequate counselling service" will have to replace present tutorial arrangements if working-class and mature students are going to make the most of the opportunities available.

It adds: "As higher education becomes more open, as it proceeds to cater for a greater variety of students, as the courses provided become more flexible and diverse, and as entry requirements become more multifarious and varied, we are convinced that the present binary system of tertiary education will become increasingly anomalous and wasteful."

"Any changes in the present system of higher education must take into account and must be part of a planned move towards a full comprehensive system of tertiary education."

## Students 'put friendship ahead of status and salaries'

Students put friendship before status and salary when they look for jobs, a major study of 3,000 undergraduates at 16 universities and polytechnics has revealed.

Preliminary results of the research, conducted by a private research organization and sponsored by a combine of companies and public bodies, indicate that the main concern of undergraduates is to find careers with like-minded colleagues. Mr Tim Bowles, who administered the project for the Shackman Research Organisation, said that year students surveyed thought that a high starting salary was important. "They regard it as more important than they are joining a convivial and morally sympathetic group."

Regular working hours and the status of the employing organization came low on the undergraduates' list of priorities. Intellectual challenge, the moral acceptability of their work and early responsibility were regarded as more important.

The survey, designed to improve the graduate recruitment technique of major firms, collected detailed information about the aspirations of students, their educational and social background, and their attitudes to work.

Mr Bowles said that an important trend among graduates was that many exhibited "mild reactions of conservatism". Two-thirds of those interviewed believed that too many people were employed unproductively in the public sector, even though many were seeking such jobs themselves.

Combined with this trend was a growth of realism and a readiness to seek employment not traditionally associated with graduates, Mr Bowles said. "Students are very much aware of the problems of graduate unemployment and this has caused some hard thinking among the undergraduate population."

The survey produced evidence of a resurgence of traditional values, he said. Most graduates pressed a strong interest in the family unit and thought stable friendships and relationships as a background to working life.

More than 18 firms and organizations put about £200 each to sponsor the research. They included ICI, Shell, British Rail, the Post Office and the Central Office of Information. In return they will have access to the full survey, which is due to be completed and published in June.

Mr Adrian Bridgewater, of Hobson Press, which is co-sponsoring the project, said the data collected would enable employers to gain a better understanding of students' values. "We want to be able to recruit graduates on their own terms, not on our own old-fashioned, prejudiced and out of date terms."

## Pharmacology centre opened

Europe's first purpose-built clinical pharmacology building, the Wolfson unit, was officially opened in Newcastle this week. The ceremony was carried out by Sir Leonard Wolfson, chairman of the trustees of the Wolfson Foundation, who financed the new unit, situated next to the city's Royal Victoria Infirmary.

The new centre will provide facilities for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, as well as for research and clinical work. The research activities will cover a wide area of investigation into the effects of drugs in man and much of the studies will involve careful observation and measurement of drug

## North American news

### Scientists demand release of Argentine prisoners

from Clive Cookson

WASHINGTON Science in Argentina is being adversely affected by clear violations of human rights, a National Academy of Sciences delegation has reported.

The academy's committee on human rights, three of whose members recently visited Argentina, has called on the Argentine government to release physicist Elena Sevilla and psychiatrist Claudio Santiago Hermann, who have been imprisoned without trial for more than two years.

The American scientists also visited Uruguay, where, they said, the government appeared to have taken a first step towards restoring human rights. They appealed to the Uruguayan military government to allow mathematician José Massera and his wife, who have been in jail since 1975, to go into exile.

However, the committee did not endorse the idea of a scientific boycott of Argentina. They feel "it is better to keep open channels of scientific communication among scientists in spite of the repressive nature of the Argentine government."

In particular they opposed the boycott of the International Cancer Congress being held in Buenos Aires in October, which some scientists in the United States and Europe have been advocating.

The NAS wants Americans to go to the conference and take the chance to express their concern over human rights to Argentinean officials and to meet the families of scientists who have "disappeared" during the past two years of military rule.

The NAS delegation, consisting of biochemist Christian Antunes, cancer researcher Robert Perry and NAS staff member Jay Davenport, met Argentine president Jorge Videla and several high-ranking government officials.

But they were unable to meet the interior minister or his top assistants to discuss political prisoners and disappearances. The thousands of people who have disappeared without trace since 1976.

The latter, the Americans said, represent "the true tragedy of Argentina".

Argentina. Large numbers of people are still disappearing. For example, when the NAS delegation were in Buenos Aires, haematologist Benito Sparagutero was abducted at 3 am by an armed gang who said they were from "the police". She was freed a week later after protests from the NAS group and other scientists.

"Was Dr Sparagutero the victim of the pure military operating under official acquiescence? Or, as government officials suggest, was the entire operation a hoax to embarrass the government?" the NAS asked.

The NAS group felt the authorities were deliberately confusing rather than clarifying the issues. Although the government has now freed more than 4,000 Argentines held for anti-government activities, the Americans feel the real issue is the fate of those who have disappeared.

In that respect Elena Sevilla and Claudio Hermann are lucky. Dr Hermann's family was told of his whereabouts months after his arrest. Mrs Sevilla, who was arrested five days after her baby was born in November, 1975, was acquitted for lack of evidence by a court in January, 1976, but she is still in jail. She is waiting for her at Cornell University physics department.

The American delegation received more official help in Uruguay than in Argentina, and they were allowed to visit Dr and Mrs Massera in their separate cells in reasonable health, though Dr Massera (First Secretary of the now banned Uruguayan Communist Party) is restricted by the lack of mathematics books and a rule that all reading materials in his prison, including mathematical publications, must be in Spanish.

The military trial for "subversive association" has dragged on for more than two years with no end in sight.

The NAS annual meeting expressed "a deep concern" over the response to NAS initiatives on behalf of Soviet scientists denied their human rights. The resolution referred to biologist Sergei Kovalev, physicist Yuri Orlov and computer scientist Anatoly Shcharansky.

### Controversy over Carter plant grants

WASHINGTON

The United States Department of Agriculture has, for the first time, thrown its cash for research open to competition.

The "competitive grants programme" is starting off on a fairly modest scale (the budget is \$15m this year, and \$30m has been requested for 1979) but it has caused considerable excitement among biologists in private universities and research institutions, who will be eligible for USDA grants for the first time.

In the state agricultural experiment stations and land-grant universities—the traditional recipients of USDA research funds—there has been consternation as it has become clear that the administration is trying to build up the competitive grants at the expense of its older research programmes.

The new programme will initially be limited to "mission oriented basic research" in four priority areas: plant biology—biological nitrogen fixation, photosynthesis, genetic mechanisms for crop improvement, and biological stress on plants—and two areas of human nutrition—human requirements for nutrients, and behavioural factors affecting food preferences and buying habits.

According to the USDA guidelines, these areas "have been considered by a number of scientific groups to possess exceptional opportunity for fundamental scientific discovery and for contributing to the long run, to applied research and development vitally needed on important food and nutrition problems."

The department hopes "innovative projects in the so-called 'high risk' category as well as those which may have a higher payoff" will be submitted.

Grants will be allocated by the peer review method, using the National Science Foundation's procedures as a model.

Biologist Dr Winifred Briggs, of the Carnegie Institute at Stanford, California, is enthusiastic about the programme, which, he says, will move research in the basic plant sciences. Others put the increase nearer 50 per cent.

Plant science is an area whose support has declined in recent years, and many biologists say it is "grossly underfunded" though veterinary scientists make the same statement about research in animal health.

The Department of Agriculture boldly brought in an outsider, Dr Henry Key, a thoughtful plant physiologist from the University of Georgia, to direct the competitive grants scheme.

He believes strongly in the programme and thinks the USDA (rather than the National Science Foundation) is the right place for a government agency to formulate safety procedures was probably a mistake: the way bureaucracies



Dr Berg: "hindered by bureaucracy"

### Stringent safety procedure delaying DNA research

from Ian Anderson

STANFORD

Research into how genes work is being subjected to "staggering" delays, says Stanford University biochemist Dr Paul Berg. He recently asked a colleague at the California Institute of Technology for an organism carrying a recombinant DNA molecule which could, for one of the protein chains of haemoglobin.

It took a month, and a lot of non-scientific effort, before he received the organism. First the colleague had to have a letter from Stanford's recombinant DNA safety committee saying that Dr Berg was approved to do the particular experiment. Dr Berg had to write up the proposed experiment for the committee, receive the necessary letter, forward it to the institute, and hope that the safety committee at CalTech would give the colleague permission to send the organism.

Bureaucratic influences on his research were put into train about a year ago when he headed a group of 11 distinguished American scientists who published a letter in the scientific weekly, *Nature*, demanding that the government set up a committee to look into certain types of experiments involving recombinant DNA until any danger could be accurately determined.

That action opened a whole Pandora's box of issues for the American scientist, especially for the molecular biologist. The public was presented with the spectre of a deadly bug escaping from laboratories around the country.

Politicians at all levels demanded that scientists had to fight intense rear-guard actions opposing them.

Dr Berg says that "at the time, publishing the letter seemed to be the proper, if not the only, thing scientists had to do. Asking for a government agency to formulate safety procedures was probably a mistake: the way bureaucracies

operate was "completely underestimated".

"We called for a halt to two experiments we thought were potentially dangerous. This move was to be until a conference could be organized to examine the issue in detail."

"We had absolutely no intention of making this a big public issue. We were totally unexpecting and naive about whether any member of the public or the press would respond."

Dr Berg said he originally believed that the precautions would be reassessed, but politics got in the way.

"We will have to be more perceptive. As our experience in research has shown, the risks are found to be non-existent, the public will realize that stringent controls are unnecessary," he said.

"There is no compelling reason to single out this area of scientific research for excessive regulation. Scientists have worked for years with experimental materials such as the hepatitis virus, dangerous bacteria, and human tumours. In the past, the public has relied on the scientists to be basically prudent; after all, they are the ones who will be affected first."

In all the fuss, Dr Berg is disturbed that the reasons for raising the issue and the potential benefits of the research to society have been often overlooked. Current examples, he says, is the controversy over who should reap the benefits from the medical and scientific advances flowing from the work.

"The way this country is structured, there are not going to be any benefits unless a commercial venture decides to develop a product or process," he said. "If recombinant DNA advances are to contribute to society's welfare, and every indication is that they can, then we could have done it. Asking for a government agency to formulate safety procedures was probably a mistake: the way bureaucracies

### Harvard votes for core studies

Harvard's controversial "core curriculum" proposals have won a surprisingly comfortable vote of approval from the faculty of arts and sciences, after months of intense debate within the university.

The new curriculum will be introduced from 1979-80 and is expected to be fully operational four years later. It will compel students to devote the equivalent of one under-graduate year to courses in five basic areas: literature and the arts, history, social and philosophical analysis, foreign languages, and natural, physical and mathematical sciences.

Dr Henry Rusevsky, dean of arts and sciences, unveiled his core proposals a couple of months ago, in March 20 after four years of debate by an array of curriculum committees and task forces.

It aroused the hostility of students who felt their freedom to shape their own education would be reduced, and from faculty members who either objected to the "rigidity" of the core or did not agree of what was included in it.

Many scientists said the curriculum contained too little science.

WASHINGTON College diplomas, \$10, can be advertised in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "Has your diploma been lost, damaged, stolen? Do you need another copy for your job or second office? Diploma Service Co. can furnish beautiful, exact copies of your diploma—bachelor's, master's, PhD."

So Robert Houghton, a social registrar at Stanford University, wrote off for a Stanford master's degree in economics. Eventually he received a 1912 master's degree—with a bill for \$17 because, said the Diploma Service Co., Stanford diplomas require an unusually elaborate engraving, hand lettering and gold seals.

But Mr Houghton was not qualified for a master's degree in economics—although he holds an authentic bachelor's degree, granted in 1931. He suspected that the company was in the degree-faking business—and was testing it out.

"It looked authentic, since it apparently was made from a photo of a real diploma," he said. "The company made mistakes. They 'spit out' forty 'real' degrees of

putting 1912 in figures, and the signatures were wrong—although they might not have been spotted by someone unfamiliar with Stanford diplomas.

Although the back of the document carried a disclaimer, "this is a reproduction from Diploma Service Co., Marina Del Rey. No school credit or degree status is granted unless the diploma was mounted or framed."

Further investigation by Mr Houghton revealed other advertisements for the Diploma Service Co. and similar enterprises. In other newspapers the same made no attempt to conceal the game they were playing: they offered "university degrees by mail—the easy way, at low cost, without attending any classes at all."

Mr Houghton handed his investigation report to the State Department's Justice which, it turned out, was already investigating the company's office complaints from other California colleges and universities.

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putting 1912 in figures, and the signatures were wrong—although they might not have been spotted by someone unfamiliar with Stanford diplomas.

### Third World aid office to open

from Edward Sheffield

OTTAWA The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada is to set up an international development office within its secretariat in Ottawa, with support from the Canadian International Development Agency and the International Development Research Centre, both Canadian government bodies.

Its objective will be to encourage and facilitate participation by Canadian universities in projects for development in the Third World.

The new office will arrange for the review of projects proposed by Canadian universities for funding by CIDA or IDRC, and act as a channel of information about needs in developing countries which could be met by resources drawn from the Canadian academic community.

CIDA and IDRC funds which can be tapped for such projects now amount to nearly a million dollars a year.

The plan for the IDO was worked out by a joint committee which represents CIDA, IDRC and the AUCC and will set the policy for the new office.

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Malta's campus: excluded from Mr. Mintoff's student-worker plans.

## Fears over university revamp

by Carl Slevin

The Maltese Government is planning to dismember the University of Malta and transfer most higher education to the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), which is to be upgraded from its present polytechnic status and renamed the New University.

This, along with the student-worker scheme, is part of a drastic reorientation towards vocational studies which offer direct prospects in the Maltese economy. Students who complete such courses successfully will be guaranteed employment in their speciality and, under certain conditions, even some of those who fail will be given jobs.

The plans have been revealed piecemeal over a long period, and considerable doubts remain because government statements have left wide gaps and have sometimes seemed contradictory. In an effort to clarify the position, a series of television interviews with senior education officials chaired by Mr. Tom Pelligri, director of the Department of Information, was being broadcast, partly based on questions sent in.

The basic principles, however, are clear. The university will lose all courses which the government regards as vocational and these will be transferred to the MCAST.

Of its existing seven faculties, the university will keep only four—arts, science, laws and theology, and it will lose some courses currently taught in those faculties. Research will be cut to a minimum and what there is will be concentrated on applying discoveries made elsewhere to Maltese conditions.

The MCAST will take over or introduce degrees in administration, business studies, accounting, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, engineering, architecture, dental surgery and medicine.

### New Zealand

## Overseas enrolments drop in face of new government policy

from Lindsay Wright

WELLINGTON New Zealand's universities are convinced that the government is slowly forcing a reduction in the number of overseas students admitted to university study, in spite of assurances to the contrary. The government's policy, first announced in 1976, hotly debated last year, and now causing a drop in overseas student enrolments, is that the number of students from any one country should be limited to 40 per cent of the total overseas student intake.

Most affected by this move were private students from Malaysia who, in 1976, made up 84 per cent of the 657 first-year overseas students admitted through the Overseas Students' Admissions Committee of the University Grants Committee. Last year, the number of Malaysian students admitted dropped to 72 per cent of the first-year overseas students.

The Minister of Immigration claimed that the places would be redistributed to accommodate students from the Middle East, and more from the Pacific.

However, that is not what happened. In 1977, as in 1976, 72 first-year students were admitted from Pacific countries, first-year students admitted from Asian countries outside Malaysia rose from 18 to 22, and the 21 others in both years

as well as continuing with teacher training, which will become a graduate qualification.

With the introduction of the student-worker scheme, which in practice restricts entry to vocational courses to those candidates who already have a job and whose employer or trade union is willing to sponsor them, most of these courses will be extended to five years, made up typically of alternating periods of six months' study, and six months' work.

However, despite opposition from the Malta Union of Teachers, it has been decided to give the BA in education only four years.

The university will be excluded from the student-worker scheme and its courses will be open to anyone as long as they meet entrance requirements and as long as they come from families sufficiently wealthy to support them and pay their fees.

This is more or less the system already in operation, although no fees are charged at present, and despite efforts by the students' representative council, there is no grant system. Student workers at the MCAST will be paid during their study periods, although the contributions of employers and government have not yet been announced.

The system is clearly intended to discriminate in favour of the MCAST and will leave the university for those students whose parents are, as the Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Micallef, has put it, capricious enough to want to pay for them.

In addition, there will be no guarantee of employment even for successful university students, whereas at the MCAST, student teachers, who pass their first and second years but fail in the third, will be given preference for positions as kindergarten assistants or librarians. Similar schemes for

other vocational courses are expected.

There has been very little consultation about the changes outside government circles. The Commission for Higher Education set up by the Education Act 1974 has met twice to discuss the plans, but only well after they had been announced, and at such short notice that most foreign members were unable to attend.

The MUT, which since its amalgamation last January with the former Malta University Teachers' Association, represents university staff as well as teachers in state schools, has requested discussions on the labour relations aspects of the proposals as changes in conditions of service for lecturers at the university and the MCAST and provision of suitable alternative employment for those who may be made redundant.

The Government has refused on the grounds that the MUT is a member of the Confederation of Malta Trades Unions, with which it has refused to negotiate because of a series of disputes over the past year.

The major academic fear about the changes is that the truncated university will no longer be strong enough to maintain its independence as a centre of learning while the New University will remain directly under government control.

The government's economic case for the changes has been attacked by the Malta Employers' Association on the grounds that such rigid manpower planning and control will remove all flexibility from the system and discourage initiative.

In response to the charges Dr. Ugo Misfud Bomici, the opposition Nationalist Party's shadow Minister of Education, has suggested that the MCAST should become a constituent college of the university.

### France

## Trainee teachers march over service conditions

from Guy Neave

PARIS A demonstration by 1,500 trainee primary school teachers in front of the Ministry of Education marks a new stage in the unrest mounting in France's teacher training colleges.

The parade was the climax of a long campaign by students in training colleges to get their conditions of service revised. Among the demands are that the Government should change the regulations governing results and examinations. The new Minister of Education, M. Christian Bouteau, has also been asked to change the conditions of initial appointment.

Since 1976, it has been a rule that those failing the final examination for the teaching certificate are not placed on the official teaching register. This effectively bars the individual from any job in the state sector though it does not stop his teaching in private or religious schools. Students have asked that this regulation be revised.

Top of the list of complaints is a cut in the state should reduce the number of years that qualifying students must serve in state schools. A condition of entry to teacher training college is that students undertake to teach in the state sector for at least 10 years.

The outbreak in the education budget has meant that many newly qualified primary school teachers can no longer find work in ordinary schools. Teachers are

appointed by central government and many have found themselves in schools dealing with emotionally disturbed or handicapped children.

Racked by the *Syndicat Général de l'Éducation Nationale*, part of the non-communist *Confédération Française du Travail Démocratique*, the call has been for a guarantee that posts be provided in regular schools for all training college graduates.

Teacher training colleges are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education rather than the Ministry of Higher Education. Though not recognized as having university status, they nevertheless require applicants to hold the *baccalauréat* and training usually lasts two years.

The widely-supported campaign has been directed mainly against the regional administration of the Ministry of Education. In Paris a sit-in at the new cultural centre at Beaubourg was organized by 400 students. In Rouen, a pedestrian precinct was blocked at the height of the rush-hour by placard-carrying protesters.

By far the worst incident occurred at Aix-en-Provence, where there has been agitation since the end of February. Student protesters were joined by members of the 'bigger teachers' union. A march on the offices of the local education authority was dispersed after a running fight with police.

### Pakistan

## Threat of military takeover

from Adnan Ali

KARACHI The University of Karachi, the largest educational institution in Pakistan, may soon be put under the direct control of the military administration. At present it is financed and controlled by one of the four provincial governments.

A spokesman for the Army chief, General Zia-ul-Haq, has said the military government will assume control of the university as soon as is feasible.

Members of the College Teachers

Association, University Teachers' Association and the liberal-democratic National Students Federation have criticized the move. The administration has blamed the National Students Federation for the recent violence and dozens of its members are now in jail.

The university, which has accumulated a huge deficit, is now appealing for private donations. Mr. Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ehsan Rashid said the main threat to the university was financial, not the intolerance and intolerance use of language at the campus.

### South Africa

## Campus split as union faces third defeat

from Martin Feinstein

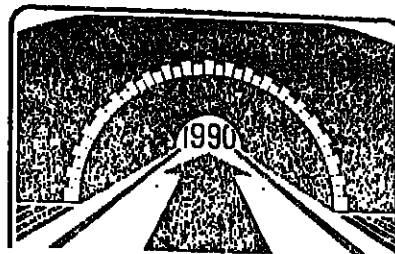
CAPE TOWN The National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) suffered a major defeat when students at Rhodes University voted to remain the only unaffiliated English-language campus.

It was the third referendum on the issue since 1976 when the disillusioned campus severed ties with the union. Once again the campus split but it was clear that the union share of the vote had shrunk. It lost by 584 votes to 848. The 79 per cent poll—nearly high for a South African university—is evidence that more and more students are taking sides over the future of NUSAS.

It is the first real test the union has faced since its 1978 theme—'Education for an African Future'—was introduced and is being seen as a reflection of growing polarization between radical and conservative students.

The university's SRC president, Mr. Izak Smuts, a great-nephew of South Africa's wartime Prime Minister, led the anti-affiliation campaign, saying that Rhodes was self-sufficient, and joining NUSAS would destroy its ability to act as an intermediary in white student politics.

Immediately after the referendum visiting NUSAS leaders, including the president, Mr. Auret van Heerden, set up a local committee to ensure that unofficial contact with students would not be lost. With the backing of two out of three campus papers and a strong lobby on the SRC, a firm support base has developed.



The answer to the first of the 14 questions in the DES discussion document *Higher Education into the 1990s*—are the projections of the 1990s—will determine the answers to the remaining 13. By these answers, in turn, may be made the original question plausible. That is the paradoxical place of the DES discussion document in the debate about the future of higher education: the future, certainly, in the short and long run, the long run, the long run.

The precipitate decline in the birth-rate during the 1970s has to be a starting point. It is, after all, the cause of the present exercise in planning. The DES projection is that the number of students in higher education will reach a peak of about 600,000 in 1983-84, which will be held for the rest of the decade, and will then decline sharply to 520,000 in 1995—the 'demographic hump'.

Their main assumption is that the age participation rate (broadly the proportion of young people entering higher education) will increase from the present 14 per cent to 18 per cent.

If the DES is right, higher education has a problem. After years, decades, even centuries of expansion, how will universities and colleges cope with an actual decline in the number of their students? Or will they be able to confound demography by appealing to a demographic cross section of the population beyond the ageing Model B?

If the department is wrong (and it is), there is nothing to worry about. So demography is not only the cause of the present exercise, it also determines its structure.

So far, three different assessments of the likely impact of the decline in the birth-rate on demand for higher education have been offered. First in the field was the Conference of University Administrators when its forecasting group under Mr. Michael Skarlock, academic registrar at Warwick University, produced an interim report in April last year.

A month later the Association of University Teachers published a report on university student numbers in the 1980s. Finally, last February the DES provided a third view in its discussion document.

On the face of it, there is little common ground among the three assessments, and a great deal of confusion in the DES's own projections. The DES's own projections of the number of students in universities will continue to grow until at least the late 1980s. It predicts a university population of 350,000 in 1987-88, which would imply a student population for higher education of more than 600,000.

The CUA report, which is much

the most sophisticated exercise of the three, includes four different projections of the number of university students. The most optimistic suggests an even higher total than in the AUP projection, more than 450,000 in the late 1980s. The second is close to the AUP forecast, although carried further into the years of decline in the 1990s. The third and fourth are close to the DES projection. The CUA is busy updating its forecasts in the light of the DES document and the latest available information.

In fact, there is probably less disagreement between the AUP, CUA and DES than this superficial account suggests. For a start, the comparative optimism of the AUP forecast is partly explained by the fact that it goes no further than 1987, and even the DES's low projection does not predict any significant decline before that date.

Second, although the assumptions made by the AUP about future student demand are certainly rosy, they are not implausible. In fact, the forecast it produces is very similar to the DES's high projection.

Third, the AUP and the CUA are concerned only with demand for university education, while the DES is concerned with demand for higher education as a whole. Universities are likely to be protected from the worst depredations of demography because of their more selective entry and because it is the implicit policy of the DES to regard them as the stable element in higher education and to concentrate any expansion or contraction in the public sector.

Fourth, of course, the three projections were produced by quite different methods. The AUP forecast is an 'internal' projection, an extrapolation of well-established trends, modified by the latest demographic information. The CUA's forecasts are 'external' projections, which start at the other end

Peter Scott concentrates on the demographic issue in the first in a series of three articles on the DES discussion document 'Higher Education into the 1990s'

## The numbers game: how far supply affects student demand

the shifting sizes of the various pools of potential students. The DES forecast looks very much like a rule-of-thumb, and probably reliable, guess.

The three basic building blocks for constructing any estimate of future student demand are:

1. The number of 18-year-olds; 2. The proportion of this number that have the minimum qualifications to enter higher education; and 3. The proportion of these that actually wish to enter universities or colleges.

About the first there is no doubt—at any rate up to 1994. The children who will be 18 then are already born. The number of 18-year-olds will rise to a peak of 941,000 in 1982-83, decline slowly to 834,000 by 1989-90, and then rapidly to 630,000 in 1994-95.

But the relationship between the number of 18-year-olds and student population is not as simple as it sounds. After all, only three out of every 20 18-year-olds go on to higher education. Nor is the demographic decline of the 1980s and 1990s unprecedented.

In the five years from 1965-66 to 1969-70 the number of 18-year-olds fell from 906,000 to 741,000. Yet the number of students in higher education increased during these same years from 304,000 to 340,000.

Another complication is that the decline in the birth-rate has not been the same in all social classes. It has been most precipitate in social classes IV and V which are least likely to send their children to higher education, and most gradual in social classes I and II which provide just over half of all students in universities, polytechnics and colleges.

It is clear that this rather slower decline in the birth-rate among social classes I and II will soften the impact of the general demographic decline on demand for higher education but by how much? The DES suggests that over the whole period up to 1995 the effect might be to increase the age participation rate by three per cent. But this assumption is not as simple as it seems. In the case of women students it is true that their number has increased at almost double the rate of the decline in the birth-rate but it will also make them less popular institutions, in a quite literal sense that they will become more socially exclusive.

Already, in the first half of this decade the proportion of university students from classes I and II has increased from 44 to 51 per cent although some of this increase can probably be explained by status drift in the occupational structure. A further shift in this direction is hardly something of which higher education can be publicly proud.

The second building block, the proportion of 18-year-olds who have the minimum qualifications to enter higher education, also looks much more simple than it really is. At present, these minimum qualifications are two or more A levels in England and Wales and three or more Highers in Scotland.

The DES estimates that the number of qualified leavers will, in fact, increase more rapidly than that of all 18-year-olds—from 128,600 this year to 153,600 in 1982-83, the top of the demographic hump. It expects this number to go on increasing even after the 18-year-old population starts to decline.

The third building block, the proportion of these qualified who actually wish to go on to higher education, is on close examination, no more certain than the first two. During the 1960s young people were clamouring to enter higher education, but in the 1970s the college year enthusiasm seems to have waned.

There would seem to have been a dramatic levelling off in the age participation rate. Between 1962-63 and 1972-73 it increased rapidly

from 7.2 to 14.2 per cent. But in the past six years it has actually declined again to 13.5 per cent.

This is not perhaps as inexplicable as it appears when the savage cuts in teacher training are taken into account because these clearly reduced opportunities, in particular for women, to enter higher education. But it is still mysterious.

The proof of the pudding, of course, is in the UCCA applications; they also have shown a tendency to level off after the exciting years of expansion. The trend is still upward but at a moderate rate which is probably only just sufficient for universities to meet their present target of 310,000 students in 1981 without a significant decline in standards.

The only fair conclusion about the influence of demographic decline on student demand has to be a broad judgment rather than a precise calculation. There can be little doubt that after the late 1980s the decline in the number of 18-year-olds, still much the largest constituent of potential students, is so precipitate that it is hard to believe that it will not create serious difficulties for higher education, particularly at the fringes of the system.

There are three sources of students which higher education might be able to tap to compensate for any shortfall in its traditional supply. It can attract more women, more students from working class homes, and more mature students.

In all three areas there is considerable room for expansion. In higher education, more than three men for every two women among university students. The proportion of students from working class homes has been stuck at about a quarter of the total for more than two generations. And the number of mature students in universities comes in the unimpressive total of just over 12,000. (It is better in the public sector.)

So, it appears there should be little difficulty in making up for any decline in the number of upper-class male adolescents.

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down the rate of growth of their number in higher education still further. In these circumstances the linear expansion in the number of women undergraduates, which is a crucial element in the AUP projection, does not look a very safe assumption.

If anything, the chances of making up for a shortfall in traditional students by attracting more students from working class homes look even slimmer on present trends. The proportion of university students with fathers in social classes IV and V has actually declined in the 1970s, from about 28 per cent at the beginning of the decade back to the stubbornly persistent 25 per cent level today.

One reason for this, paradoxically, was the research in the public sector women students—a good demonstration of how many of these demand trends work against, rather than with, each other.

Nor should the demographic pattern of the next years be forgotten. The birth-rate in socially most rapidly in social classes IV and V, the working class families from which some urge higher education to recruit more students. In fact, in terms of the social class composition of its student body higher education will probably have to run quite fast just to stand still.

Mature students look a more promising source of new students, but this may be partly a result of the paucity of information about who mature students are and why they are attracted to higher education. The success of the Open University opens up a tantalizing prospect of an untapped pool of eager students, but what the more-traditional institutions will want in the late 1980s and 1990s are not the lecture room and the laboratory.

In all these discussions there is a missing link—and it is, unfortunately, the most vital of all. It is that there is much less information available about the pattern of demand in the public sector than in universities. Not in the public sector that is likely to bear the brunt of any adjustment because universities will be able to monopolize more of the traditional students by a marginal lowering of entry standards.

State public sector institutions, in contrast, will be forced into a 'reverse academic drift' as their regular degree-type students are pushed by universities. In any case, in a more positive light it is the polytechnics and the colleges that are best suited by their traditions to undertake this wider role.

So an urgent priority is for studies of student demand in the public sector which are at least as sophisticated as those that are available about university students.

The answer to the first of the 14 questions, therefore, must be a qualified 'yes'. It still seems the most reasonable guessimate of future student demand on our present information—and that information is not going to improve dramatically before important decisions have to be taken by the Government and by individual institutions.

This, of course, is the crucial point. We cannot wait and see. By then it would be too late to act. But if higher education acts now by modifying its character to appeal to wider sections of the community than at present, these projections will become redundant.

Demography cannot provide the answer; it merely poses the question. Like Robbins, the present planning exercise may be starting off as a numbers game—but like Robbins, also, it will almost certainly end up as something much wider.

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# One hundred years on and always the innovator



From right: the new, the old and an old craft—weaving—in the new setting of the textile department.

Simon Midgley reports on the Bradford College success story

Originally it is one thing that Bradford College is not short of. Next week, for example, it is celebrating the centenary of the foundation of a college that no longer exists.

Although Bradford "tech" was founded in 1878, it disappeared as a separate entity in 1975 when it was incorporated into Bradford College.

But then the people of Bradford are a likely (and likeable) lot. And only the cynical and ill-informed will dub the occasion as a spurious pretext for civic self-indulgence and merriment.

For the creation of the "tech" was a significant and, in many ways, remarkable educational achievement in what was then one of the most radical and progressive cities in England.

Apart from being a centre of rapid industrial growth, Bradford was a likely (and likeable) lot. And only the cynical and ill-informed will dub the occasion as a spurious pretext for civic self-indulgence and merriment.

The growing demands of ill-educated workers for opportunities for self-improvement had coincided with the realization by local businessmen and radicals that there was a need to improve scientific and technical education.

And so, even now, Bradford Technical College, as it was later known,

has in spirit at least, never ceased to exist. Originally created to serve the city's post-school industrial and commercial needs, the college continues to build upon the ideas and enthusiasms of its founding fathers.

Despite recent changes and a spite of recent amalgamations (the colleges of art, technology merged and later joined with the Margaret McMillan College of Education) the "tech" lives on for Bradford people responding to the city's needs in as radical and innovative a way as ever.

One of the larger, single educational institutions of its kind in the country, it is also unusual in that it serves all the local further education needs. Bradford, alone, has a population of 350,000.

The campus, housed in the heart of the city, is a mixture of buildings combining the grandiose pretensions of Victorian burghers with the stark simplicity of those unworried concrete slabs so much beloved of twentieth-century architects.

Of the 20,000 student population around 3,000 are full-time. Salaries for the 433 full-time, 400 non-teaching and innumerable part-time teaching staff account for two-thirds of an annual £6m budget.

The college offers a spectacularly diverse and imaginative range of courses extending from postgraduate, degree and certificate work to adult literacy schemes and programmes especially designed for unemployed 16 to 19-year-olds.

One of the most enterprising moves in recent years has been the need to improve scientific and technical education.

In a variety of ways it has attempted to adapt itself. These

include: special canteen diets for the Muslims; a lecturer has been appointed to look after immigrant interests; lecturers visit the minority groups and explain in their own languages what the college has to offer; and facilities for religious observances are provided for the different faiths.

GCE courses are offered in Urdu and Punjabi as well as several courses in English for immigrants and, more unusually, a major option in Asian Studies is a well-established part of the college's Diploma in Higher Education. This course is oriented towards the problems of urban, industrial and multi-cultural communities.

Students who take the Asian component have to be fluent in at least one Asian language—Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati or Urdu. The unit focuses on those Asian communities whose original homeland was the Indian sub-continent; their history, language, cultural traditions and the contact between Asian and host communities.

Mr Bob Fairthorn, course director, says that the eight students currently taking the Asian option are all highly articulate, highly intelligent and exceptionally committed. By 1982-83 children of immigrant parents will account for 18 to 20 per cent of the school population in Bradford. At the moment, Mr Fairthorn points out, almost all the city's teachers are white.

It is hoped that the course will prepare students to become teachers and administrators and for work in industry where Asians, in some factories, comprise the total work force.

Plans include a £100,000 Asian studies library and of creating a free standing degree in Asian Studies. Thought is also being given

to the possibility of creating a West Indian studies option along similar lines.

One of the main reasons why Bradford College is today one of the country's most pioneering and socially responsive institutions is its originality and drive of its principal, Mr Eric Robinson.

He is a member of the Labour Party executive's science and education subcommittee, chairman of the education committee of the Equal Opportunities Commission, and the author of *The New Polytechnics*. And it is his vision and determination that has made Bradford College one of the most successful multiple mergers of recent years.

Similarly, it is his foresight, energy and fundamental sympathy with the original ideals of the technical college founders that will probably ensure that the college will go its own, often controversial, way without worrying too much about ruffling the plumage of the DES mandarins.

A passionate believer in the need to move towards a post-school system of mass education for all, Eric Robinson argues that this can only be achieved by developing existing institutions of further education.

At Bradford College he is justifiably proud of the fact that students are offered the chance to start in adult education and to progress through further and higher education without leaving the institution.

Since his arrival he feels the college has begun to improve the status and morale of the lower-level teachers, of non-advanced further education students.

"The worst thing about segregation in work is humiliation," says Mr Robinson. "I think the lack of confidence of teachers in

further education is a great source of weakness in the British education system and in the British economy.

And I think of the engineers and higher education I have often got the feeling that, having regard to the level of salaries in the world outside, these are the people who would not be very successful in that world."

Whereas at a craft and technical level—the plumbers, hairdressers and typists (where status and salaries are much lower outside education) the college attracts are the best. "I have not a shred of doubt that some of the best bricklayers and plumbers in Yorkshire work in this college," he adds.

"I think that the idea that the Plinlston committee has it in its power to solve the problems of manufacturing industry is absurd. You have got to raise the level of skilled workers. You will not solve the problem simply by getting the top chaps right."

If the morale of the lower level teachers in FE can be improved then they will transmit this enthusiasm to their students. This, he argues, is the only way to get out into the manufacturing world and have the confidence and initiative to innovate and criticize.

Today Eric Robinson says: "If we can give the teachers of engineering crafts and the teachers of hairdressing the bounce and confidence of university teachers then this will be the most significant thing that this college will have achieved. . . . We should be trying the building workers of this city not just to use the building process of the day but to be participants in the building methods of the future."

to this extent the MSC is an exception."

The other aspect has been the tremendous exposure both he and the YOB have received. "I would get in a position of being exposed. A large part of the job is broadly, representation which is something like in the Civil Service does not prepare you for."

This constant exposure has also left the way open for criticism from both he and the programme have been under fire since it was announced. Although he has not spoken the criticisms personally, he does admit that he has been a little depressed and irritated by what has been said publicly is wrong with the programme without first pointing it out to him.

Perhaps because of this and in spite of only reaching 40 this week Mr Holland expresses fears about his survival and declares his main priority on a purely personal level as "staying alive."

Being a realistic optimist, he has made no definite plans about his future career. He firmly believes in a "wait and see" policy. "around the corner in five years time are things unknown of today which will need to be done," he says.

One cannot help having a shakely suspicion that, although Geoffrey Holland enjoys his present job immensely, once the programme is truly established he will hanker for a new challenge.

Patricia Santinelli

The decline of nations is normally gradual and undramatic. Occasionally, however, an event occurs which suddenly makes clear the nature, direction and extent of the decline. The event may be relatively trivial in itself, but it stands out as an example and a symbol of everything that is wrong. Such an event is the Oakes report on the management of higher education in the maintained sector.

Not to be too apocalyptic it is with public and administrative failure that I am most concerned. Here our most conspicuous characteristic is a failure to manage. It is expressed in ever-increasing intervention by Government, with more and more decisions taken centrally and with the creation of more and more tiers of administration and semi-independent committees and other bodies.

There is a wholesale flight from responsibility: each part of administration seeks ways of pushing the buck. No one wishes to be accountable. People stand for public office or take highly paid jobs in administration out then avoid the responsibilities involved. There is a tendency, particularly in central Government, to undermine the legal foundations of public services. One way in which responsibility is avoided is through replacing decision by the juggling of interested parties. In this way individuals are neglected except where they are represented by interest groups.

The major public services are fast coming to be considered as being run for the benefit of their employees rather than the public they are intended to serve. Indeed major reorganizations take place with almost no reference to the public at all and certainly without even a plausible case being made that the reorganization will improve the service to the user. The discussion of democratic administration has neither rigour nor relevance, so reform is a matter of wandering from one flabby expedient to another. Morale is low, inefficiency and incompetence use up all the experience of the public in their social services too often depressed and demeaning. Every one of these characteristics is triumphantly displayed in the Oakes report.

Its major proposal is for a national body to take over the higher education in the public sector and to oversee its development and cost effectiveness. The body will consist of representatives of local authorities and institutions and others nominated by the Secretary of State. There are also proposals for regional and local administration, but I am not concerned with these in this article.

The first, and abiding, impression one gets is that it was produced without benefit of any mental process at all. There is no real formulation of the problem to be solved; nowhere a defence of the proposals against alternatives; nowhere a claim for the benefits to be expected of the new system.

Instead we get a page or two of history, a chapter on underlying assumptions, a whole host of even more subterranean and unstated assumptions, a number of mis-statements of the present position and then an elaborate piece of institutional building. The absence of fundamental thought is important. Liberties and opportunities are most easily removed through muddled and question-begging proposals which offer no basis for rational argument.

It is important to cut through the confusions of the Oakes report to restore the fundamental basis on which education is organised in England and Wales. It rests on the distribution of powers and duties as set out in the Education Acts. The law clearly gives the local authorities responsibility for providing further education. To the Secretary of State it gives the duty to regulate, approve and accredit the organization of local government (which reduced the number of authorities) it became possible to fulfill the promise of the Act. The Oakes Report will kill that promise.

It is no answer to this to say that the local authority associations will be represented on the national body. Representatives of representatives are a long way from democratic accountability. Their independence will be gone.

It will be recalled that Louis XIV successfully ennobled independent local responsibility in France by drawing the potentially powerful nobility to Versailles and by occupying them with protocol and pleasure. The Oakes body will be a kind of Louis XIV. For example, education chairmen will be relieved of any actual responsibility for higher education in return for continuous visits to London to



Gordon Oakes

Tyrrell Burgess argues that the Oakes report will kill the vision of the 1944 Education Act for every local authority to have a comprehensive education service, including further education



Tyrrell Burgess

## This would be no way to run a public service

Local authorities are responsible for so much that no one would dream of holding them accountable, and the habit of ministerial resignation when things go wrong has as a consequence largely died out.

The imposition of the Oakes committee's national body cannot but reduce the accountability both of the Secretary of State and of the local authorities and will ensure that decisions will be taken by a committee which cannot be held accountable. Both the Secretary of State and the local authorities will be able to disclaim responsibility. This is no way to run a public service.

The Oakes proposals mark the end of responsibility of individual local authorities for higher education. The national body will distribute resources and will advise, coordinate and do all the other unnecessary bureaucratic things which strangle the healthy development of institutions and of local responsibility.

The vision of the 1944 Act was that every local authority should have a varied and comprehensive education service, including areas of advanced education. A responsive system cannot be planned, coordinated, developed and advised from the centre or even from regions. If it responds at all it responds locally, at the level of the course and of the institution.

During the past 30 years it has indeed responded, offering places to those excluded by the universities (whose numbers were nationally planned) and upturning the careful projections of the Robbins Report which were centrally calculated. At the same time the public sector has pioneered new kinds of courses and new validating relationships, precisely because responsibility was diffused and local initiative possible. Central decisions about the planning and funding of higher education were made at the end of this responsiveness.

The tragedy is that Gordon Oakes himself is committed to the expansion of opportunity for those to whom the education service at present offers nothing. He does not seem to understand that the body which he proposes will inhibit the very changes he desires. For the future we need a public sector which seeks to attract to itself new kinds of students, through the creation of new kinds of courses, to reduce the number of students who are excluded from the public sector, especially to civil servants and other officials.

As the experience of colleges of advanced technology and polytechnics has shown, the effect of central planning has been to reduce the number of students who are excluded from the public sector, especially to civil servants and other officials.

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The mechanisms for achieving these inhibitions are somewhat different. For example, on the regional advisory councils the universities will be represented, but they will not be subject to the council's decisions. It will thus be possible for university representatives to block education on the grounds that they are competing with established university courses in the same field. This will reduce at once the capacity of the public sector to innovate responsibly.

Another sinister possibility is that the Oakes body will seek to support quality by channelling funds in the direction of places with reputations. Unfortunately this too is doomed to achieve the opposite of its intentions. A national or regional body such as is proposed by Oakes cannot even in principle support good work. By the time it gets to hear about and confirm quality, the original impetus which created it will have petered out and most of the good people will have gone elsewhere. The attempt to support excellence nationally will merely mean pouring money into dead departments.

There is one of the unwarranted assumptions of the Oakes Committee which has a very long history; that it is the Secretary of State who is to be responsible for the distribution of funds to the local authorities under Section 42 of the 1944 Act to prepare schemes of further education for their areas showing how they propose to provide a varied and comprehensive service.

Some local authorities will turn out to have "too much" further education, and others "too little". What they will have to do is collate for a transitional period, and the terms of the redistribution can be for the authorities to work out and submit to the Secretary of State. They may form joint education committees. They may agree on a regional council. Whatever they decide it will be what best suits their local needs.

Central intervention, by way of the allocation of funds or through a pool, is quite unnecessary. The money for advanced further education, like the money for the rest of education, can and should be raised from the rates and from taxes through the normal distribution of the rate support grant. A solution of this kind would be built upon the present distribution of powers and duties, it would give some understanding that at any rate in one sphere there was a concern for effective rather than merely enlarged administration and for the clear accountability of central and local authorities.

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## Fighter against deprivation's effects on democracy



Geoffrey Holland

They are the result of experience gained in the then Ministry of Labour which he joined in 1961 as assistant principal, and in private office, first as assistant private secretary to Ray Gunter, Minister of Labour between 1964-68, and then more recently as principal private secretary in 1971-72 to successive Secretaries of State for Employment, Robert Carr and Maurice Macmillan.

This was the period of the miners' strike, and it was the latter, Geoffrey Holland believes, which made him think about the limitations on the power and room for manoeuvre of any government.

He believes that high unemployment is here to stay, and therefore he has to think about an employment policy which addresses itself to the needs of people looking for jobs.

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But what he thought would turn out to be a temporary job lasting a year was overtaken by developments as both the TSA and MSC began to flourish. "So I found myself much more than the head of a planning team, to establish something, I found myself head of planning, for the TSA."

From then on the need for the commission and the need for corporate planning for the whole of the enterprise committed him even further as he became head of planning for the MSC, and he claims, chairing the working party for young people because there was no one else around.

There are, however, two elements of his post as director of special programmes for the MSC for which he has a background and for which he has been well-equipped for his present post.

He recalls how he was plucked from private office to become head of planning for the Training Service Agency by a deputy secretary in the Department of Employment, suitable to lay down the foundations of the commission.

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The survival of democracy in this country and the deprivation in cities like Liverpool are not issues immediately associated, but Mr Geoffrey Holland, architect of the Youth Opportunities Programme, they are inextricably linked.

He identifies the problems of Liverpool with the way our institutional framework has operated against the needs of the local community and individuals, thereby posing a serious threat to democracy.

He points out that you can have all the marvellous programmes in the world and devote all the public expenditure you like, but unless something concrete happens at local level, you are brewing up trouble.

"Suppose you live in Liverpool, one of the most depressed centres of Merseyside, and you read about programmes after programmes, about £60 million being spent on YOP about financial help being devoted to inner cities, but unless something happens in Liverpool, it is going to be singularly disheartening."

"In this country, if we're really honest, very little of anything has happened to areas like Liverpool, and I am determined that under the Manpower Service Commission programme something happens there."

Geoffrey Holland's views about the need to reform the institutional framework, and limitations on the powers of central government, are set out in his latest book, *Manpower Service Commission and the rise of unemployment*, published by the Manpower Service Commission.

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# EEC approaches to entry that could do Britain some good

As an EEC member, Britain has been invited to comment on the European Commission's document "Admission to Institutions of Higher Education of Students from Other Member States". Here Ted Cox discusses the document. The DES is expected to submit its views by the early summer.

The Commission identifies a number of problems, and its proposals amount to a fairly dramatic reappraisal of UK policies. Such changes are presumably in our interests since it is by now clear that the response from our partners is likely otherwise to be an extension of the infectious protectionism which is already apparent, and in terms of Awards Regulations the 4,000 students abroad each year are there as an essential part of their courses.

Britain is in the peculiar position of limiting numbers by decision of the institutions themselves, which causes happenings that must seem very strange to those used to free entry in Italy or France, or *numerus clausus* systems in Germany, Denmark or the Netherlands. Indeed in 1971 it was possible for universities to suffer a shortfall of 1,300, according to UCCA, yet to exceed the projections of the Government and the Universities Grants Committee by some 10,000 full-time students.

This lack of an exact answer to the question of how many places exist cannot sensibly explain the difficulty Western European students have in gaining access. The Commission suggests equal treatment for applicants, the exclusion of one year visiting students from any quotas and the encouragement of bilateral exchange, whilst recognising the undesirability of encouraging students to study abroad only because they cannot gain admission at home.

The last proposal raises a problem, since it would become necessary for a British student going abroad to demonstrate to the competent authority his acceptability at home. It would seem that he would have to apply through the Universities' Central Council on Admissions or otherwise, and be accepted, since this is the only mechanism available. The problem needs to be thought about carefully, since the alternative is at least as unacceptable. There are now studying in Italy who are in excess of the number of medical openings to be provided in Greece. It may be that freedom and planning are uncomfortable bedfellows.

The proposal is effectively to place Britain in the same position as any other signatory to the 1963 Convention on entrance requirements, the provisions of which have been ignored in the United Kingdom because the signatory Government does not enforce admissions policies.

The question of equality of treatment here implies another problem. Because the pattern of secondary education is markedly different in England and Wales, first degree courses are based on assumptions concerning previous knowledge in specialist subjects which are unlikely to be met by foreign applicants.

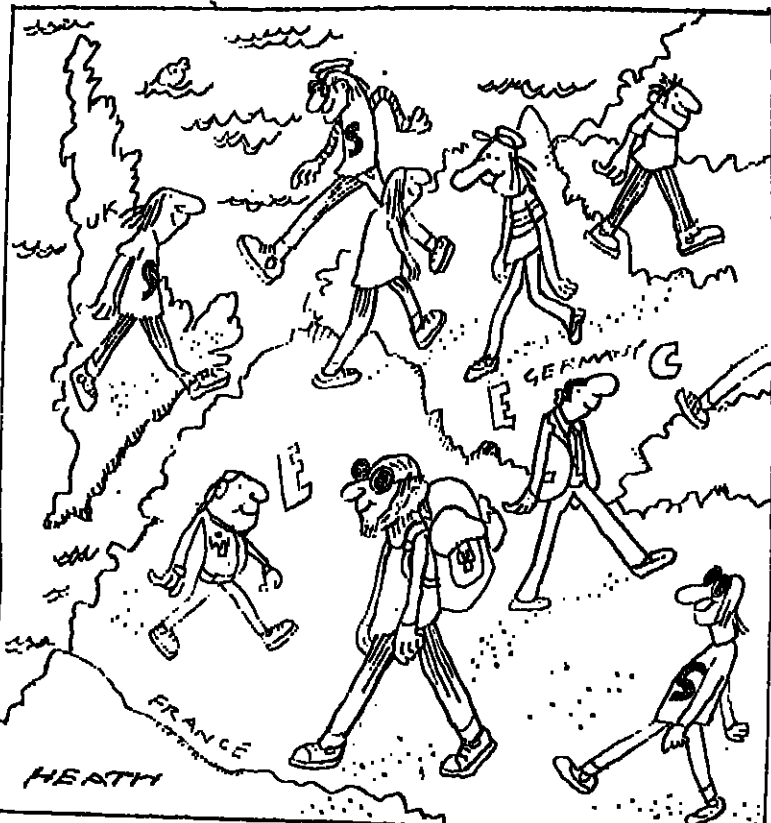
The importance of this difference is debatable. There is evidence that the ability to use facts creatively is more important than the accumulation of received information. Given this, a good score in the relevant subjects in the *Baccalaurat* or *Abitur* may seem to be the sensitive and knowledgeable admissions officer at least as acceptable as the O and E grade currently accounted for entry to many science courses. The answer may lie in one of two directions: a guarantee of knowledge and sensitivity amongst admissions personnel, or a broader sixth form curriculum.

Next there arises the question of fees. Britain and Ireland share with Belgium the doubtful distinction of discriminating against foreigners, particularly against those from the European Community, and the difference has actually been increased for 1978-79.

To those concerned for mobility, or even for anglophilia, it is apparent that the amount actually paid for this discrimination, perhaps £7m in 1977-78, is minute in relation to the total budget, yet causes enormous annoyance abroad where it is too often seen as ill-conceived and irrational, as anti-European, anti-socialist and anti-egalitarian, which is good and beautiful. The point is whether such antagonism is justified, but that such bad feelings are allowed to prosper.

Ministers of Education have better things to do than to defend such a miserable position, which might be more reasonable if Britain were not importer of Community students; but in the United Kingdom students benefit from the fee charges in France and Germany, and there are Europeans availing themselves of the United Kingdom taxpayer's generosity. The United Kingdom profit on the figure, given is annually between £1.25m and £2m depending on how many incomers are exchange students.

The Commission is modest in its proposals. It sees no reason why



foreign students should be treated more favourably than home students, and then goes on to make the obvious point: "where... the home students are effectively absorbed from the payment of fees through the operation of the grant system, appropriate arrangements should be devised to accord the same treatment to Community students." The point is well-taken.

Given that it would be unthinkable (wouldn't it?) to accord Western European students financial advantages denied to the underdeveloped Commonwealth, and its interest to discriminate against Americans, Arabs and the Dominions, there appears to be only one sane answer, namely to abolish tuition fees. At home the main effect would be a redistribution of expenditure between central and local government, the resulting increased dependence of universities on government would be a worry, but for the fact that the pass is already sold, outside of Buckingham anyway.

The Commission finally raises the question of linguistic requirements, pointing out that they should be a threshold requirement rather than an element of competition. Such a view is supported by research findings, as is the second view, often ignored in university entrance requirements, that the competence in a foreign language is a good indicator of the student's proposed specialism. The suggestion is for intensive language courses for those about to embark on courses to be taught in a non-native language, though there might be merit in further research into the results of such options exist.

One of them is to approach the problem from the other end. One way measure to achieve social justice, or merely a piece of justice to the white population; what, if anything, is there to be said against sexual promiscuity? Bernard Williams is the presenter and chairman of the subsequent arguments, and he does the job with considerable skill; it seems to me that the greatest of all virtues is the ability to sympathise with all points of view, but not so much as to be unable to give all of them a rough ride too.

But the stars are in many ways the ordinary unscripted participants who get the arguments going. The children in the first programme are quite strikingly engaging—their sort which used to form a part of those expensive courses in executive training, and is now common in numbers of comprehensive schools. Here the children are cast as company proposers to appoint one of their number as assistant manager, and being an enlightened sort of firm, wants to know whether any of the reasons they all do know of a reason—the person in question used to steal as a child, and was eventually expelled from school, taken to court and put on probation; but it was a long time ago. What's relevant, of course, is which children say they do know of something against him and which don't, and what sort of reasons they give.

Readers of Bernard Williams' work will not be terribly surprised by the pleasure he shows when it turns out that none of the children offers utilitarian or consequentialist (or wince) to lie about their colleague's past. One says firmly that the crime has been paid for already by a spell on probation, and that wipes the slate clean; another says that he's always found his colleague helpful and cooperative, and that he therefore owes him a return for his good offices.

Those who are against covering up simply think that we ought not to lie about what we know. (One suggested that it would be foolish of the company to forgo the services of someone in the past, but that was the closest anyone got to anything like utilitarian arguments. Readers of Bernard Williams' work will be equally unsurprised at the sympathy with which such moral qualifications as loyalty, integrity and sympathy.

The programme which will most effectively gratify those with a hankering after late night combat is that of positive discrimination. There, Ronald Dworkin and Anthony Flew lay about each other with a fair absence of inhibition, Dworkin defending the view that if it is an effective means to bringing about racial equality, positive discrimination involves no injustice, and Flew sticking firmly to the view that we appoint less qualified teachers in place of more qualified white teachers, we are behaving as racists ourselves and therefore are doing exactly what all sides agree we should not.

The argument is one which has some nice ironies in it. Professor Dworkin's enthusiasm for, as he titles his book of essays, *A Matter of Principle*, appears in the end to take seriously only your right to be treated in whatever way a social policy of which he approves requires you to be treated.

It can't be said that many of the dilemmas get very effectively resolved; but, of course, they are thought very likely that philosophers could do very much to resolve them. To the extent that it is a properly philosophical feel between different moral aspirations, or even a philosophical and a bit less confused what was previously inchoate and incoherent, "Dilemmas" could decently be reckoned to be doing a good job.

The author is reader in philosophy at New College, Oxford.



# Immigration policy and the death of liberal Britain

Robert Moore argues that recent immigration policy has damaged rather than improved race relations in this country

Politicians of the two major parties claim to have cut down, or to have shut the door on immigration. This was Mr Callaghan's defence against Tory critics when he was Home Secretary and now that he is Prime Minister.

Mr Robert Carr (as he then was) said that by the 1971 Immigration Act the Conservatives had closed the door, firmly and unambiguously, on any government that might try to open it. Mr Carr was standing the truth upon his head; the Act had opened the door more widely than any measure since restrictions were introduced. How was it then that Mr Carr was able to get away with what seems like a simple misstatement of fact? The answer is that the Act opened the door to potential immigrants who were overwhelmingly white; when Mr Carr said immigrants, he meant blacks.

I suppose it might be argued that a racist consensus is now so strongly embedded in British politics that no one feels the need to speak the whole truth any more. It is certainly the case that the meaning of words has changed so that "immigrant" now connotes "black". The white patriots and grand-patrials who come to work for short periods, to settle, visit or avail themselves of the facilities of the National Health Service are simply invisible in immigration terms; they do not appear in the statistics and are treated as unproblematic.

So white black Rhodesian opponents of the South Africa Bill, who were not from Rhodesia, were not counted as immigrants. Rhodesians are freely admitted. This seems odd, to say the least, because while coloured immigration control is justified on the grounds that it is good for community relations, it is good for Rhodesians, the presence of whom can hardly be thought to be conducive to good race relations.

The 1971 Immigration Act might have restricted white immigration and indeed could still be used to do so, but the Rules issued by the Home Office which implement the Act excluded in grand part, Commonwealth citizens who had a grandparent born, adopted or naturalized in Britain—the right of entry, and this was the result of a campaign begun by the Daily Express to reject the draft Rules laid before Parliament, because they would keep out too many whites. The Times had suggested in a 1965 article that the rules should be altered to let in more whites "who bring nothing but benefits to British life". The Times apparently cannot be bothered to recognize the nature and extent of black immigrants' contribution to the economy and society.

That immigration policy is directed against blacks is now openly accepted and arguments about the size of the British population, common in 1960s, have been dropped in favour of the assertion that black immigration control is good for race relations. No evidence is ever brought in support of this contention, but restrictions upon blacks have been accompanied by the deterioration of race relations; so how is it possible to support this contention that immigration control is good for race relations?

It is important to notice that the assertion that only very recently has it even been challenged. It has become part of the accepted wisdom adopted by all political parties, by leader writers, by commentators in the mass media in general. But up until about 1968 the argument was largely said to be based on numbers; how many people could be taken in? What sort of burden could be accepted upon the social resources of Britain?

The arguments about numbers have been substantially undermined by the fact that more people were emigrating than immigrating. The arguments about burdens upon social resources were destroyed by the research which shows that the contribution of black immigrants to our economy is much greater than that which they take out of it. The only case that can be made is that if the population is increasing and you

do not wish to increase by immigration, then you must stop immigration from all sources.

The 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act was openly based on race, as it was again when updated in 1971. It is now commonly said that everybody knows that the argument about immigration is really an argument about race and always has been but it is important to remember how strongly this was denied in the past. Thus the recent Select Committee on Immigration and Race Relations looking at the question of immigration control stress that it was coloured immigration that really concerned them—although they felt that non-discrimination was a little remote for entitlement to unrestricted entry. In the recent restrictive proposals of the Conservative Party no mention is made of the need to restrict white immigration, while it was said that control should apply to all nationalities, the notion of partiality.

What I want to argue is that the race for coloured immigration control improving race relations has not only not been made but that it could be turned upon itself. For example, one could argue that the demand for increased immigration on the basis of immigration control is itself a symptom of bad relations; or third, one could argue even more strongly that the restrictions placed upon coloured immigration are a cause of the deterioration of community relations.

It is necessary to begin by looking very briefly at the modern history of immigration control. In 1962 we had a Commonwealth Immigration Act which sought to control immigration from the Commonwealth but not to limit it. It brought it under control, it merely meant that Commonwealth citizens now needed their passports stamped when they came into Britain, which had not been the case before. In 1965 Harold Wilson introduced a White Paper, *Immigration from the Commonwealth*. This laid the ideological basis for all subsequent policy—defining the argument that numbers was the essence of the debate about immigration. The White Paper had been introduced a year after the 1964 General Election when Labour had lost the South-East constituency, the seat of Patrick Gordon Walker, to a Conservative candidate who had played on the immigration issue. And then Patrick Gordon Walker lost a by-election at Leven, and it was widely thought within the Labour party that this was as a result of the immigration issue.

## Question of how many

From this point the debate was no longer one of principle, namely on what grounds could one limit immigration into Britain. It was only one of how many, and this could be controlled by means of the quota system. One of the most important aspects of the White Paper was that it implied that immigration from the Commonwealth was a problem and therefore the Commonwealth immigrant was a problem. Having defined this problem simply in terms of the number of people coming in, it could be said to have implied that the fewer we had the better.

And it was from 1965 that we began what has become known as the "numbers game". Racists could argue that too many people were being allowed in. By squeezing on the numbers it was possible to reduce Commonwealth immigration to come into this country. But because numbers are of the essence, it could also be argued that there are too many people coming in; that they, too, swell the number, and this has been part of the more recent debate. But even when it has been shown that new immigration was being

very substantially squeezed it could still be argued that "we're cooking the books" and that although the Government can show from statistics that there are less and less immigrants coming in, there really are not many less—after all the statistics are wrong. If numbers are of the essence then it can be argued that there are lots of blacks being born here and these, too, constitute a numerical problem.

If it is the case that the fewer we have the better, then it seems to me one could argue for repatriation. It is not just a question of limiting the numbers coming into Britain, but of reducing the numbers actually here, and this would seem to be the next step in the racist bidding on immigration control and race relations. It is important to note that governments have not been able to satisfy racist demands.

But still there are more demands for greater restrictions. This is because once you have conceded that numbers are of the essence there are some people who are willing to argue and willing to work at persuading the public that the only number that makes any sense at all is this. These people cannot be satisfied as governments of both parties have promised; governments have always been asked to do more by somebody who demands that there be even fewer blacks in Britain. This has happened because in party has taken a stand on principle. They have only been prepared to argue about numbers.

At the time of the passage of the 1968 Immigration Act, which was designed to prevent an influx of British citizens from Kenya, were being expelled under the Africanisation schemes of that country, there was an atmosphere of almost hysterical racial tension. The alarm sounded by the press and taken up by politicians accounted the influx from Kenya and therefore legitimized the restrictionist demands. The notion that Britain was going to be taken over by black British citizens from East Africa, soon gained currency. No two speakers in Parliament could agree upon the figure.

Even debates about the Race Relations Acts and the Immigration Appeals Act of 1969 were accompanied by rabble-rousing speeches inside and outside Parliament, accompanied also by heightened tension in immigrant communities, and actual physical violence against blacks in certain parts of the country. What one might argue is that despite the liberal assurances that we were always given, for example in the second half of Wilson's White Paper, which talked about positive measures to help the coloured population here, despite the Race Relations Acts, despite governments saying they will stand by the pledges given to the Commonwealth, and that they are anxious to promote good community relations, the message is coming across clearly to the British public that blacks are the threat and that we need to be mobilized against them.

There was a further very important limitation upon coloured immigration, although it is not widely recognized as such. The Immigration Appeals Act introduced procedures for people who have been denied entry to Britain, for reasons that they brought unjust or false claims against. This more restrictive and racist law has been encouraged to ask for more. The atmosphere in which demands have been made and the legislation passed has in the short term been the occasion for direct violence against blacks and in the long term has created an atmosphere of mistrust and hostility between the black and white communities.

Act to prevent a rush of immigrants. In terms of the 1969 Immigration Appeals Act this was a disaster because the appeals machinery was set up in the United Kingdom; the crucial issue, however, was that people were to be able to get entry certificates overseas. There was some protest about this and a civil servant was sent to investigate the situation overseas and to see if there was any case for appeals machinery overseas. He reported that there was not.

The report, by Sir Derek Hilton, was so defective on elementary matters of fact that it seemed hardly worth the paper it was written upon. For example, he said that an entry certificate could be obtained immediately upon application the same day and that appointments took two to three weeks. (It was based entirely on discussions with officials overseas—mainly British officials, the people against whom the passage of time was fine and he reported this. In 1971 we had an Immigration Act which consolidated all that went before and which enshrined the distinction between patrials and non-patrials, first developed by the Labour Government in the 1940s. Sir Derek was told that everything was fine and he reported this. In 1971 we had an Immigration Act which consolidated all that went before and which enshrined the distinction between patrials and non-patrials, first developed by the Labour Government in the 1940s. Sir Derek was told that everything was fine and he reported this. 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# Don's diary

## Tuesday

First day of fortnight's visit to Karl-Marx University, Leipzig. Official business: fostering eight-year-old link with Leeds University. Also personal interest: what makes Marxist-Leninist University tick? 10 am: first engagement—new officials in academic link office who started work at 7 am (normal start of university day) and therefore needed hospitable slug of brandy that nearly finished me off. Offices too hot—secretary's comment when perusing our hunger interestingly translated "would you like to take off your clothes?" Lunch in SCR equivalent—for 60p, roast wild boar, spiced red cabbage, fancy spuds. Our two universities have many similarities: size (Leeds 10,000 students, KM 12,500); wide range of arts and science-based academic disciplines; large medical school, proximity to city with 500,000 inhabitants; good football team (even better, days). Contrasts: KAMU much bigger business though only 20 per cent more students—total population 25,000 (Leeds 15,000); budget three times larger. Leeds scores heavily on numbers of committees and registrarial personnel (a plus or minus factor?), constitution, organization, decision-making, financing and resource-allocation are quite different.

## Wednesday

First DDR hangover didn't materialize thanks to Alkater, Tourist university's new Tourist, Tourist with 27-floor tower, housing artists, subjects as central feature. There is a 20-second lift to top. Greatly impressed by new lecture theatre block (rooms 80-150 seats, 3,200 sq ft) and adjacent building with 120 lecture seminar rooms. Audio-visual equipment more lavish than anything I've seen in Great Britain: various projectors, television monitors in all rooms (large rooms have a dozen or so fixed on ceiling camera) and back of most (but not all) lecture consoles at lectern for beamed lecturer.

## Youth service deserves examination



Steven Muller

One continues to wonder why universal national youth service programmes are not receiving more consideration in modern democratic societies. Perhaps, at first mention, the idea seems to smack too much of compulsory military service, or of the Hitler Youth or the Konsohola. But such a programme would respond to so many contemporary problems that at the very least it deserves serious examination. Looking generally at urbanized industrial democratic societies one sees: bored and restless young people with doubtful prospects for employment, high unemployment combined with needed work that goes undone because it pays too little and is regarded as degrading as a career; social services insuffi-

ciently performed because the cost of labour involved is too much; an oversupply of unskilled labour; universities crowded with young people who at least in part are students because there is nothing else for them to do, and who are being prepared for specialized roles in numbers that exceed foreseeable need. Within any single country, a universal national youth service programme might address these difficulties. Such a programme could be voluntary, not compulsory. It need not involve uniforms, barracks, nor other aspects of a youth army. Its cost to a national society might even be less than already existing programmes of public expenditure. Its social impact would offer some attractions. It could probably be fitted together with either compulsory or voluntary military service.

In most Western democracies, a compulsory universal national youth service programme would be rejected as too authoritarian. A purely voluntary programme would not in all likelihood be universal unless there were some compelling incentives. Therefore, a voluntary universal programme would be founded on two assumptions. For young men and women who would not seek post-secondary education, the programme would offer job training. For those seeking post-secondary education, a government stipend and/or free admission to education would have to be earned by national service and would no longer be available on any other basis.

What would young people do during a period of national service? There would have to be a great variety of options, tailored within any one nation to its own circumstances and needs. In general, most agencies of government would benefit from young men and women serving as well as at a local and regional level, at a national level. Such public agency service would also offer excellent

job training opportunities in a vast array of tasks, considering the range of activities in which contemporary governments are involved. Another general set of opportunities would exist in staffing of neighbourhood public service facilities—for the day care of children, for health maintenance, for the guidance, counselling and recreation of children, or for other aspects of neighbourhood improvements whether physical or social.

In nations with programmes of assistance to less developed societies, international development assistance abroad could be an option for youth service. In countries where urban decay is a problem of major metropolitan areas, slum rehabilitation projects could be staffed with national youth service volunteers. In states which are substantially agricultural, harvest projects could be created for youth volunteers. The maintenance of public transportation facilities, whether highway, fixed rail, air or waterborne, could also offer youth service opportunities. In most of these areas, job training could be combined with service, assuming that the service period would last for two years.

Military service would become simply one youth service option among many. Those not physically qualified for military service would elect other options in states with a compulsory military service obligation, while all young people could choose among military or civilian service in states where military service is voluntary.

Based on the principle of service, the programme would pay one's subsistence wage to volunteers while in service. Viewed also as an investment in both the national society and large and the young of society, the programme would on the one hand offer low-cost labour for public service, and on the other hand offer job training and access to post-secondary education to the young. The economics do not appear to be unrea-

sonable, especially because governments already spend so much on access to post-secondary education in an unearned, rather than an earned, benefit.

Except for those in military service, it would not be necessary for youth service to wear uniforms, nor would there be a general need to house them collectively. Most could live wherever they wanted to, especially because service within local communities would appear to be the most useful. Supervision should also be localized as much as possible and could in most cases be assigned to individuals already in public agency careers.

Perhaps the most attractive version of a universal national youth service programme could be developed with the full participation of commercial and industrial private enterprise. In principle this appears to be possible, and this version would work as follows: a participating private employer would accept and select a stated number of youth service applicants, and would have their services available for the same time and at the same subsistence wage as is universally set for the whole programme. In return, the private employer would also have to guarantee job training and, in the case of participants entering enrol in post-secondary education, would be fully liable for the expenditures which are borne by government for the public sector participation.

The latter obligation would be equitable for at least two reasons. These participants, talented enough later to qualify for post-secondary education, would presumably make the greatest contribution to the profits of the private enterprise in which they fulfilled their public service, and costs to private enterprise beyond such a return would still be an appropriate investment in the education of young people by the private sector of the mixed economy of modern democracy. Private sector participation would in any case be voluntary. Its great

attraction lies in the opportunity for participants to follow a career in public funds. The greatest benefit of a universal national youth service programme would accrue to youth of democratic societies. Ideally, such a programme would offer every young person opportunity to serve his or her society constructively for a year or two, and to be able to diminish, if not disappear, training would be at least a partial option for every young person, and not necessarily confined to training in only a single task. Employment might flow from the contracts established by the national youth service. People going on to post-secondary education would have their education interrupted by work experience. Experience indicates that such an interruption has a positive effect on subsequent motivation and performance, especially if national service options are available in areas of work related to chosen profession or occupation.

Above all, the universal youth service concept could do much to relieve the alienation and frustration of young people in modern democratic nations. Young people would appear to be used, and would not be used, and it would allow them to earn the benefits of job training and education. This is a social and economic benefit that is sorely needed in the contemporary world.

On the face of it the NUS 'initial response' to Higher Education in the 1990s is spurious. It argues that the document has ignored the fact that the birthrate of social classes 1 and 2, and the 50 per cent of higher education entrants, has not fallen anything like the same proportion as the general birthrate. However, this factor is clearly acknowledged in Appendix 11, paragraph 1, of the document which also suggests its influence on the projected

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